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Play as a Way of Life

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The author, professor of education at New York University and managing editor of THE CLEARING HOUSE, hardly needs to be introduced here. For years he has vigorously promoted the play idea in education and might count to his personal credit many converts who are exponents of the idea now. Professor Long takes play seriously in his own life, as all of us know who have been permitted to share his enthusiasm for his candid camera, his darkroom, and his elaborate photographic gear.

THERE ARE as many ways of quibbling in a discussion of play as there are in a discussion of the New Deal. We soon come to a definition of terms in either type of discussion and the dictionary does not help very much. Each of us has a personal understanding of the meaning of terms and only with reluctance are we willing to agree that there may be something to the other point of view.

One popular conception of play is that it is frivolous, and if that is your notion you may find ample support in the dictionary. For instance, one definition reads: "to treat, practise, or deal with by way of amusement, sportive imitation, or representation, or without serious purpose; to trifle with; to pretend to engage in; to make believe." If you are convinced that play is engaged in without serious purpose then a play-way of life probably would indicate to you a way of life that might be characterized as drifting.

Most good citizens believe that life is a serious proposition and certainly there is little to lead us to think that it is growing much easier for large proportions of our population. Early in our history it was decreed that those who do not work cannot eat.

And such a principle seems to have been reasonably adequate until recent times. But more of this later.

The first argument against play in schools runs as follows: Since life is a serious proposition we should proceed to make of school a serious proposition so that pupils may be prepared for the hardships they are certain to encounter. If we are to prepare for serious living in a school that takes itself seriously, then surely there is little place for trifling play in its program.

But how did we ever get the idea that play is lacking in seriousness? If you will observe the players in a bridge game you certainly must agree that the game is played for all it is worth—often for all the players are worth. Any one who has hit the line in football will not argue that such an act is a trifling event. Alpine climbers seem to take their play most seriously, and indeed why should they attempt to make light of it when they know that their very lives are at stake in the undertaking? Just one other example: I have a very competent professional friend who gets some relaxation each week in his darkroom. He tells of the most interesting

things that happen there. He plays at the job of being an amateur photographer.

But, it may be observed, all of these examples represent only incidental phases of living. It might even be proposed that all these examples are of persons who have earned the right to play as a reward for having engaged in the serious part of living. In a word, they have worked and have earned the right to play.

There are two sides to this argument. Some members of our society have been fortunate enough to find themselves working at tasks that have furnished them with a play-way of life. Otherwise stated, they have such love for their work that it is essentially play to them. If this is the case with an individual then he naturally takes little interest in bridge, or mountain climbing, or amateur photography. But surely he has found the play-way of life! There is the other type who works hard at his job and eventually wins the right to play at something else. It seems that he has been willing to stick to uninteresting tasks so that eventually he might be free to do things he is most interested in doing. Possibly there is some reason for believing that he has found the play-way of life if he ever reaches his goal. That is, when he can put aside a fair share of the drudgery of living and assume his share of the joy of living we may conclude that he has reached a goal that, for him, is meaningful. He, finally, has found the play-way of life. But neither of these men represents a fair sampling of American society. Comparatively few persons tackle their work in a spirit of play. Indeed, many jobs are of such a character that all elements of adventure for the workers have been removed. Also, large proportions of our population have not had sufficient "success" in their work to make possible the reward for which they are working; namely, a chance to participate in the kinds of activity that appeal to them. In other words, they continue to drudge.

But we must not overlook the millions who have nothing to drudge over. The mil-

lions of men and women who are out of work obviously cannot find the play-way in their work, neither can they earn the right to play by working.

As indicated above, America has made a virtue of hard work. A necessity was forged into our thinking as an essential of life. Now that so many of our people cannot find work to do, we, and they, are faced with the problem of what value these unemployed are to society. So long as the struggle for existence was one of producing a sufficient quantity of the essentials of living, almost any energetic person in good health could eke out some sort of existence. The requirements of life in a pioneer society were meager indeed. But we are being forced to reconstruct our attitude toward work when millions are unable to find work to do. But that is a phase of the problem of a way of life that cannot be considered here. Let us limit our consideration to those who do and will work.

As indicated above, millions of mechanical jobs offer no challenges to those employed, beyond the wages that make life possible. Regardless of the social forms that are evolved, many millions of persons will have to work at uninteresting jobs. But only a very severe philosophy would lead one to believe that such monotonous work can ever be considered as a desirable end in itself. However, if a man can work for a sufficiently long period of time each day or week to carry his fair share of the economic load there will remain sufficient time so that life, even for the lowliest, may have great richness and real meaning, provided he has learned to play. For such men, play becomes a way of life. Can the schools afford to overlook the necessity for adequate preparation for this phase of existence?

Most school people are willing to concede that there is some justification for play in a school so long as it does not interfere with the serious purpose for which the school is run. We seem to have an overpowering distrust of any "work" in the school that is done in the spirit of play. But suppose we consider some of the facts to determine

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whether the intelligently directed play school actually sugar-coats reality more than the conventional formal school.

I have before me a project completed by the pupils in the Buxton Senior School. Recently, I received a carefully written letter from one of the girls in this school explaining that they had prepared a sixty-two page illustrated study entitled *Hands Across Africa*. For twenty-five cents they agreed to send me a copy. I sent my remittance and here is their report. The eight chapters of this study are as follows: Africa, The European Grab Bag; Did the "War to End War" End It?; Mussolini, The Man of the Moment; Italy's "Collection of Deserts"; What is Ethiopia?; All Aboard for Addis Ababa; Treaties and Troubles; The Gathering Storm.

If space permitted, I should like to quote at length from this report. I am convinced that any reader would agree that the pupils have done a superb piece of work; that it is not a superficial matter-of-fact document. I am assured that it was conceived and executed in the spirit of an adventure. Certainly only in such a spirit could it possibly have been done by high-school pupils. The research that went into this volume would do many college classes proud. They might have studied the rivers and the mountains and the people of Italy and Ethiopia for many weeks and never have caught the real significance of the situation. By their "play" of four weeks they have demonstrated that they have done mature thinking on the problems that are the concern of today.

In a junior high school that I visited last week the pupils are learning French by the play method. They seem never to have any lessons to learn and yet they seem to be making remarkable progress in their "work." Must one *work* in order to learn French? I have before me a record of the correlation of geometry and history—an example of pupils just playing. The teacher sums up the result as follows: "They have developed the

power to analyze a problem keenly and develop its proof logically, a power unquestionably superior to that of any group that I have ever led through the traditional paths of Euclidean righteousness."

Another example of the play-way in education is found in the many adult programs that are making serious contributions to our social welfare. Stimulating beyond description is the sight of over fifteen hundred adults assembled in one junior high school in the evening for courses in literature, astronomy, psychology, art, science, history, and other subjects. Truly this school is a play school. The teachers lead but cannot compel. Any one observing this school is forced to agree that it has serious purpose. Over two thousand agencies are providing adult education in New York City alone. All of us are familiar with the schools in the CCC camps. Here again, education is founded on the interests of the students.

We still have many examples of schools that wish to be selective, but the pressure of society outside the schools is gradually forcing a reconstruction of our educational philosophy. We are beginning to realize that the formal school has never been very successful. Pupils erected rather effective defenses against a school regimen that did not recognize their major needs. Millions dropped out and other millions determined to make the best of a situation. Many former members of both groups acquiesced in the curtailment of expenditures for schools at the first sign of financial stress.

Comparatively few teachers understand the play-way of education. Probably relatively fewer administrators approve of the idea. Frankly, we might get further with the plan if we called it the interest curriculum. But it does take time to realize that society moves, and as more teachers realize that the play-way of life is the objective of a larger and larger proportion of our adults they shall be more willing to accept the play-way of education for adolescents.

The Spirit of Play in Education

Ellsworth Collings

Recently a group of educators in that forward-looking book, A Challenge to Secondary Education, agreed that "we should attempt to reconstruct in a thoroughgoing fashion every aspect of the American secondary school." These educators should approve the school described in this article by Dean Collings of the University of Oklahoma College of Education, since in it "the traditional organization is ignored in every particular." Purposeful play activities make up the curriculum.

PLAY SEEMS FUNDAMENTAL in all normal, living beings. We see its presence in the varied activities on all sides of us. It may be the songs of the birds, the joyous notes of the insects, or the glories of childhood. Its characteristics are clearly observable in all these activities. Activity of some kind is at the bottom of all play. It may be, for instance, in the case of children, finding out something, constructing something, communicating something, or competing in something. In any event, the child's bent is to do something—to create, to make, to discover, to reach onward.

A second characteristic of play is purpose. Purpose is the child's end in view and guides its activity toward the accomplishment of a definite end. For example, in the roly-poly game the child's purpose is to make the highest score—to win the game. The purpose in this instance guides the child's activity in making the bowling lines, arranging the roly-polys, bowling, keeping scores, etc. Play in this sense is purposeful. Purposeful activity is the fundamental characteristic of play—it is the spirit of play.

Play as the purposeful activity of children is fundamental in education for it provides the normal conditions for the development of natural, child living. Through the purposeful activities of children the teacher has an opportunity to promote growth of children in setting up more fruitful activities to pursue. Children set up activities on their own accord, but through the guidance of the

teacher it is possible for them to find out how to choose new and more fruitful activities. Then, too, opportunity is provided for growth of children in planning pursuit of their activities. Under the guidance of the teacher, they have an opportunity to find, select, and use the things necessary for successful realization of their chosen activity. For example, in the roly-poly game, the teacher enables them to plan the distance of the bowling lines, the arrangement of the roly-polys, rules for playing the game, value of the scores, ways for recording scores, etc. In addition, an opportunity is provided for children to execute more efficiently the plans formulated for their chosen activity. The teacher has a chance to aid children, as in roly-poly, in learning how to bowl more successfully, how to cooperate with other children in the game, how to keep their scores, etc. Children have an opportunity to improve their ways for carrying out their chosen activity. Finally, opportunity is provided children to grow in judging their own successes and failures in carrying forward activities. Under the guidance of the teacher they learn how to find out better wherein mistakes are made and how to overcome them. In other words, purposeful activity provides the normal conditions for the continuous development of children's activities along fruitful lines.

Since the school is an institution established by society for the purpose of enriching child life, it would seem in the light of

the foregoing that its most consistent function would be to provide opportunity for boys and girls to pursue purposeful activities. Perhaps a brief description of a school founded upon this conception will indicate what such a school does for boys and girls. The curriculum of the junior high school of the University of Oklahoma is organized entirely around the purposeful activities of the boys and girls of this school. The traditional school organization is completely ignored in every particular. The function of this school, we believe, is to enrich the present lives of the boys and girls in their own time and in their own measure. We have excursion projects, or purposeful study of community problems, because investigation and exploration of their own and other people's environment is a normal phase of their expanding life. We have story projects, or purposeful communication through reading, storytelling, dramatization, singing, and writing because at this age it is almost impossible to supply the demand for stories. Play projects are a vital part of the life of these boys and girls. The more vigorous and challenging the play, the more it appeals to them. Football, baseball, basketball—all forms of athletics are pursued by both boys and girls. And, of course, boys and girls like to make things, hence our construction projects in wood, metal, leather, repair jobs, cooking, sewing, and the like. Finally, we have discovered that boys and girls of this age want to be highly proficient in particular activities, hence our skill projects in typewriting, handwriting, mechanical drawing, dancing, instrumental music, debating, public speaking, oratory, etc.

Boys and girls in this school pursue five different lines of projects. The first line is the excursion project. It involves purposes of boys and girls to find out something—to explore, to investigate, to discover. Its scope is wide. This includes the whole range of civic activities carried on in life outside of the school. In the second place, it involves purposeful study of industrial activities. This

includes the whole field of industrial activities. In the third place, the excursion project involves purposeful study of natural phenomena. This includes the whole range of plant life, animal life, and earth and sky. The second line is the story project. It involves purposes of boys and girls to communicate something—to converse, to dramatize, to tell. Its scope is exceedingly broad. In the first place, it is not limited to any particular form of communication. It includes communication through writing, storytelling, dramatization, and reading. In the second place, it is not limited to any particular content of communication. It includes a wide range of stories in fiction, biography, history, fables, legends, outdoor life, poetry, drama, essays, travel, and industry. The third line is the construction project. It involves purposes of boys and girls to construct something—to make, to produce, to fashion. Its scope is wide. It includes purposeful construction in wood, metal, paper, textiles, leather, raffia, reed, rope, clay, paint, water colors, and foods. The fourth line is the play project. It involves purposes of boys and girls to compete in something—to win, to beat, to outdo. Its scope is broad. It includes purposeful study of a wide range of indoor and outdoor games, sports, and contests. The fifth line is the skill project. It involves purposes of boys and girls to perfect something—to excel, to exceed, to be proficient. It includes purposeful study of a wide range of activities in manipulation, vocal expression, written expression, and muscular expression. The following typically illustrate some of the activities of this school:

I. THE EXCURSION PROJECT

- How beaten biscuits are made
- How Norman gets its water
- How the *Daily Oklahoman* is published
- How the Ford is assembled
- How Norman is governed
- How James is tried in the Juvenile Court
- How Norman spends its dollar
- How Merit makes our bread
- How Mr. Smith runs his bank
- How Mr. James makes our flour

How the Wendell Company makes chocolate candy
 How our homes are protected from fire
 How our homes are lighted by the Oklahoma City power plant
 How Mr. Leach runs his dairy
 How the Sunshine Home cares for children
 How the Oklahoma City ice plant makes our ice
 How Mr. Lewis gins cotton
 How the Wilson Packing Company prepares our meat, etc.

II. THE STORY PROJECT

Dramatization of
Silas Marner
Courtship of Miles Standish
An Indian Legend
Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch
Grandmother's Wedding
The Flower Fairies
Hoosier Schoolmaster
Pioneer Life of Grandfather
Tom Sawyer
Penrod
Chester Gump
King Lear
Miss Minerva and William Green
Huckleberry Finn
Penrod and Sam
Seventeen
Money, Money

III. THE CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

How we prepared our luncheon party
 How Sam made his radio
 How John removed the water from our aquarium
 How Willie made his aeroplane
 How Mary made her cooking apron
 How Lillie made her house rug
 How Bill made his library table
 How Fannie made her jewel box
 How Sarah made her leather handbag
 How Jane made her flower basket
 How Thomas made his hall tree
 How Lula made her Easter dress
 How James repaired his phonograph
 How Mary made her Indian blanket
 How Margaret made her table scarf
 How Lillie made her boudoir cap
 How Bob upholstered his mother's rocking chair
 How Fannie made her Indian moccasins
 How Jennie made her card case
 How George made his puttees
 How Christine made her Indian basket
 How Jane made her serving tray
 How William made his nut bowl
 How Susie made her Indian vase

How Celia made her Egyptian bowl
 How Reta made her Valentine cards
 How Lorena made her painting of "Snowbound"

IV. THE PLAY PROJECT

Tennis
 Football
 Basketball
 Volley ball
 Track
 Baseball
 Boxing
 Tumbling
 Wrestling
 Swimming
 Hiking
 Skating
 Indoor baseball
 Balloon ball
 Ball push
 Dodgeball
 Easter party
 Halloween party
 Valentine party

V. THE SKILL PROJECT

How to engage in debating
 How to engage in dramatic reading
 How to tell stories
 How to sing alto in the glee club
 How to write a short story
 How to write shorthand
 How to use the touch system of typewriting
 How to play the flute in the school orchestra
 How to do mechanical drawing
 How to do pen lettering
 How to engage in folk dancing

Our concern is not to teach subjects not guided by any course of study. Our sole aim is to help the boys and girls of this school to pursue their own activities better and more fruitfully. The content of the school activities is made up of those things that intrinsically function in carrying forward successfully the activities of the boys and girls at the time. The pupil's activity is not made a vehicle to teach the conventional school subjects. The conventional school subjects as such are ignored completely. The subject matter of these subjects is used only at such times as it functions genuinely in enabling boys and girls to realize better their own chosen purposes. And in such instance

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this material is selected and planned by the pupils at the time it functions in their activities. It is never planned from above and handed down to the pupils in the form of nicely prepared exercises. The curriculum, in other words, is made "on the spot" by boys and girls and the teacher in conference. The pupils choose, plan, execute, and judge their own results under the guidance of their teachers. They budget their own time. The daily schedule is, of course, extremely flexible. We have been able to note improvements of boys and girls along these lines:

1. The pupils do well in their work. They take pride and joy in doing effectively the things they set out to do.
2. The pupils like their school. They spend hours in the library reading for the sake of the fun they derive from reading good books. Attendance is almost perfect. No disciplinary problems of any kind arise.
3. The pupils are optimistic. They are happy in their work. They think their school can be improved in many ways. They accept responsibility and meet failures with a determination to do better.
4. They are learning how to think. They are learning to base their thinking on reliable facts instead of their own prejudices. They often disagree with their teachers, but always because they consider the facts they

have gathered on a point justify such disagreement.

5. They are learning how to study. They know how to find material, how to interpret facts, how to assemble facts to prove points, and how to use materials.

6. They are learning how to work together. They are reaching a point where they are willing to consider what others have to say and do regarding things.

7. They are learning how to purpose. They are learning how to discriminate in their choice of purposes. They are reaching a point where they base their choice on the merits of a thing. Their range of purposes is widening.

8. They are learning how to formulate plans. They are learning how to select the necessary means for achieving their chosen purposes. They know where to find these means, and how to formulate them in a plan for use.

9. They are learning how to perform things effectively. They are learning how to use books, apparatus, and materials in attaining their chosen purpose.

10. They are learning how to discover successes and failures in their own work. They are reaching a point where they see some of their own mistakes and how to improve them.

Play's the Thing

Alice V. Keliher

Dr. Keliher has been appointed chairman of the Progressive Education Commission on Human Relations which is preparing curriculum materials to cut across subject lines. We may look forward to interesting and worthwhile results from a committee imbued with the spirit evidenced in this article.

"OH, IF ONLY I could get this thing done. I can't keep my mind on it. If I could just scrap it all and do something else." Each reader who ventures into this article has said something of this sort sometime in his life. Many have said it often. Each reader also knows dozens of people who are saying it more or less all the time. In fact, if we wanted to be statistical about it, we could place people on a scale indicating the degree to which they are genuinely absorbed in what they are doing. Some people, we know, cordially hate their work and all that it demands. They push themselves to do the tasks involved. Others are enthusiastic, eager, interested, and excited about what they are doing. The second group are the happy people—the ones we envy—the ones most likely to be healthy mentally and even physically. The former group are those unhappy persons who are often prone to unbalanced living and ultimate mental illness.

Our topic is play and its role in life and education—but we find ourselves in the midst of a discussion of mental health. Why? Watch your friends at play, when it is really play for them, and see how well integrated they are while they are in the process of playing. The tired business man plays golf. At the moment he drives off the tee, his business concerns are far away. His whole self—physical, emotional, intellectual—is tied into the act of driving. The worried school superintendent goes fishing. He puts behind him the machinations of unruly board members, and concentrates his whole energy on playing and reeling in the catch. His whole self is somehow involved in what he is do-

ing. He is "playing." Another type of man is working in his chemistry laboratory. He is on the verge of a new formula for a carbon compound. A few hours more and the formula will be his. He forgets lunch—the clock spins unnoticed—even his heart beats a trifle faster. His whole self is caught up in what he is doing. But, you say, this man is working. Yes—and playing too, because, under the conditions of his work, it has the qualities of play. This man is indeed fortunate, because his potentialities for a balanced existence are in direct ratio with the drives which go into his work.

We could go into a deep scientific discussion of the organic nature of the chemist's personal integration. This would be presumptuous. It has been as well said before. Read Burnham's *Normal Mind* and you will find amplified such a statement as: "Thus integration is the essential characteristic of the normal body. The study of the nervous system suggests clearly that integration is the essential characteristic of a normal mind as well."¹

According to mental hygiene, the person who is continually doing things which go against his grain finds it difficult to be an integrated person. He does one thing with part of himself, and with the rest of himself wishes to be doing something else. The split in his interests produces definite mental mechanisms such as daydreaming, compensations, projections—all of which Burnham states so clearly, adding the implications for education. Now what is the sig-

¹ William H. Burnham, *The Normal Mind* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1925), p. 33.

nificance of this basic fact of human living for play? It seems, from observation of people at play, that when they are genuinely playing they are the most perfectly integrated. Interest is completely absorbed; physical energies are directed toward the activity involved. The emotional tone is clear. The individual is said to be happy. If these conditions do not exist, then the individual cannot be said to be really playing. We all know many people who go through a bridge game with the same compulsion that they do a distasteful job. We know people who insist on taking up the newest fad—not because they lose themselves in the activity, but because it is the thing to be done. Obviously, this is not a pleasurable experience for the individual. Genuine play has a whole-souled flavor. There are no halfway measures that satisfy.

Our culture has produced a situation which makes the attainment of integration through play rather difficult for the great masses of our people. In the first place, not recognizing the great importance of play for mental health, communities have not provided the means with which all persons may find modes of play congenial to their personalities. Thus we have reports of young persons in reformatories whose desired activity is organized games, but whose energies, through lack of proper outlet, have gone into antisocial acts. It is interesting to see that in the studies of play interests of young people the type of play which calls for the most highly integrated activity, organized sport, usually comes first. Developmentally, youth needs group as well as individual play. Society, however, finds it easier to take the unenlightened way out and let the radio and the moving picture substitute for genuine play.² Twenty million people go to the movies each week. Other millions listen to the radio. The very life-giving quality, the very therapeutic value of play—its dynamic, creative force for

the individual—is completely lacking in this noncreative, ready-made entertainment. Those who are dealing with young people—particularly with adolescents—should ponder at great length over the significance of this situation. Adolescents, perhaps more than any other group, need to have their drives integrated around interests which command their full output of energy. They need interests which bring them together in groups for common aims. Lacking such interests, or lacking the materials and facilities for the outlet of such interests, these young people turn to illicit modes of play as naturally as the thirsting man stumbles toward the mirage. It is a violent denunciation of society in general, and education in particular, that our average criminal is nineteen years old.

Not only do young people turn to illicit forms of play when none others are presented, but they often indulge in excesses in the play which is permitted to them. This is true not only of youth, but of adults as well. It occurs most frequently with those people who, through the very urge for survival, must compensate in some way for the grossly unsatisfying lives they live. The factory girl, whose work is inhumanly monotonous, compensates by wild release in what she thinks to be her play life. The slavey dreams of the handsome prince and, with the aid of the movies, escapes through this fictional play life from the sordidness of her own existence. The evil follows when she no longer holds the thread by which she can bring herself back to reality.

Closer to our own work, as teachers of adolescents, we see over and over again the excesses to which our young people go in having what they call "fun." Many things may lie back of these excesses—even the school. We owe it to youth to examine the school program and see whether, perhaps, there is something of the same monotony and slavishness to tasks lacking in challenge, which may produce as compensation a type of play in itself disintegrating to person-

² Alice Mitchell, *Children and Movies* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1929).

ality. On the other hand, I know of a school which had to make a ruling that the children should go home by 5.30 because they found so much to challenge them and so many avenues along which their own interests could go. I have heard these children complain at the advent of vacations. School to them was play and work and work and play, and if I asked any child whether he was working or playing, he probably could not tell me.

Stand outside a school door at dismissal, and in two minutes you can evaluate the school. Do the children tear out with whoops of delight at being released? Then you can visualize the program. Watch such children, because their school life is not providing them with the integrated, wholesome, life-giving values of play. Was it this extra vigorous whoop of joy at release from classes that made us sneak play in by the backdoor and call it "extracurricular?" Now let us face squarely the fact that it must not remain "extracurricular." Man's play must be, and his work should be, the product of his own creative living. The school has a two-sided responsibility—to help people find the work in which the highest integrity of self is possible, and, tangled in the process, to help people to round out this work where need be with wholesome and genuine play. This latter is no "extra" job. It is essential in education for life.

Let us look at three serious misconceptions of the role of play in schools. One we have touched on in our criticism of the word "extra." If it were possible to make clear the meaning of integration, we could then make clear also the fact that play and work cannot be treated as two separate entities. Play has a legitimate place in mathematics and Greek as well as in football and tennis. And indeed, for some people there may be more genuine fun and more potentiality for integration of self through mathematics than through football. The point is that we still cling to enough of the old theory of discipline to be suspicious when the rare

teacher achieves the attitude of play in academic realms. Yet what higher tribute to teaching could there be than that a teacher and his students find genuine joy in their work? And what more foolish mistake could be made than to penalize the errant youngster who didn't get around to passing in his English theme, by depriving him of his role in the dramatic club! A curious system of penalties has grown up in some high schools, in which play is sacrificed to the great god Discipline. How fundamentally foolish this is! The highest form of discipline is the discipline of self, which will operate through the application of one's own truest motives to one's own choices in life. Obviously, the better integrated the person, the more superior his self-discipline. The person with a grudge; the person who feels himself unfairly barred from the play outlet he desires; the person who is being disciplined in an extreme sense is losing, rather than gaining, discipline of the highest order. A physical-education teacher recently said aptly: "When they begin to deprive a child of his English class because he needs more time for gym, then I will accept the imposition made on the physical-education program when children are removed from physical education to make up English."

A second misconception of the role of play is more subtle. It is the selective choice of students for play activities as it has been carried on in the typical high school. So much has been said of this in the field of athletics and, consequently, the trend toward intramural sports is so marked that it is not necessary to discuss this error in terms of sports. Physical educators have come to see that their program must meet the developmental needs of all. I wonder, however, if we have thought of it sufficiently in other activities? Is it not still the custom in most schools to pick the most talented and the most beautiful girl to take the lead in the play? Is it not the custom for the most impressive speakers to make the debating team? Does a child whose soul is filled with

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music and the desire to share with others in the production of music have any chance in the school orchestra if his sense of rhythm is not all it should be? In other words, are young people *really* being given the outlet they need? Are they being given an opportunity to express themselves in the areas in which their souls yearn for expression; those areas which will yield for the child the highest degree of integration? Again, let me quote, this time a master teacher of literature and dramatics. He has recently been thinking through the possibilities in dramatic expression for the understanding of human relationships. He said: "I am just coming to realize the true function of dramatic expression in the life of the adolescent. I used to pick the person who could play the part best. Now I watch all the youngsters carefully and try to pick the part that will do the youngster the most good. Perhaps the shy child needs a shy part—perhaps he needs the opposite, an aggressive part. I try to give him what he needs. My drama students write the biography of the character they play. In so doing they come to understand what went into the making of the person. I see this type of dramatics as personality guidance." We could let this teacher's comment stand as an inclusive criterion for the selection of play activities.

Third, and last, a matter of serious import for those schools which are devoting themselves to finding more progressive ways of dealing with youth, is the question of standards in play. In our continuous stress

on integration, we have used the words *whole-souled, integrated, absorbed, satisfying*. These words in themselves imply standards of performance. The satisfyingness of play, the absorption of the player, and the potentiality for integration of the personality depend not only on the release derived, but also upon the manner of playing. Some schools have fallen into the notion that, where play is involved, slipshod techniques will do. Thus, any old way of holding the bat, loose interpretation of roles, lack of concern for diction in dramatics or debating work, and general muddling around with things has been accepted on this false notion that play, to be spontaneous, must have no inherent standards. This in itself spoils play. Broken golf sticks that line the courses are mute evidence of men's dissatisfaction with inadequate techniques. Lest we spoil the satisfaction and delight in play, let us give young people the physical, social, and intellectual techniques that are needed. Young people themselves do not wish to be slipshod. Their standards are usually higher than ours. Let us take a page from their code and in all our educational work incorporate not only the blessed medicine of fun but also the satisfying food of a task well done.

We can say little more in summary. Play has a distinct therapeutic value in man's life. The nearer work comes to being play, the more chance man has to survive the pressures about him. In our schools let's mix the two until the play in work and the work in play become inextricably fused.

Hobby Clubs in the South Pasadena Junior High School

G. Derwood Baker

The problem of getting each teacher and student into a club he will like has always been a difficult one for administrators. Mr. Baker, principal of the South Pasadena Junior High School of South Pasadena, California, offers an interesting and different solution.

THE JUSTIFICATION of clubs in the junior-high-school program seems to be a subject for continual debate. Where clubs are accepted, discussion as to whether they should supplement the curriculum or should be extracurricular, partaking of the nature of leisure activities, is a perennial one. We see these problems cropping up again and again in the periodical literature of the profession and we hear them discussed wherever junior-high-school administrators assemble. They are questions which each administrator will have to solve for himself in the light of the educational philosophy and objectives which determine his policy.

Many junior high schools have used their club programs as an enrichment device for the curricular activities of the school. They have established French clubs, Spanish clubs, Latin clubs, tumbling clubs, current-events clubs, science clubs, etc., to supplement the instructional program, to provide opportunities for boys and girls and teachers to participate in vital experiences which seem to have no place in the classroom. In the past ten years, however, changes have been taking place in the nature of the curriculum and in the type of activities carried on in the classroom which have tended to make this type of club less and less necessary. In many progressive schools the Latin class itself has been set up as a Latin club and all activities appropriate to such a club have been incorporated within the activities of the class. The historical trend has been, first, to ignore the interest activities of boys and girls; sec-

ond, to organize them as extracurricular, outside the school day; third, to find time and supervision within the school day; and, finally, to incorporate them within the curriculum.

The type of club referred to above was tied closely around the teacher's teaching interest. It found its justification in the enrichment objective of the course of study. Enrichment of subject content is an accepted junior-high-school objective, but another more fundamental objective is that of exploration; to reveal the possibilities for interested endeavor in as many fields as possible. Good teachers are carrying on this function in every classroom but the class necessarily has specific and limited objectives. Pupils are placed together because of similarity of age or capacity. They are seldom if ever grouped together on the basis of interest. Under such circumstances a club program based upon a hobby objective can make a tremendous contribution to the exploratory function of the school. It makes the assumption that the number and the kind of an individual's interests are an important index to his personality and his education and it assumes that the school has a vital responsibility in planting and developing these interests.

If an administrator accepts this point of view and decides to establish hobby clubs as a contribution toward the exploratory function of the school and toward the worthy use of leisure, he will still have the problem of deciding how the clubs are to be established

and how they are to be administered. In the South Pasadena Junior High School we have found that hobby clubs function most satisfactorily when they are built around a hobby of a teacher. This is undoubtedly due to the fact that people teach best that which they know best. It has a more subtle aspect, too. Interests, like the measles, are catching. The enthusiasm and the sparkle which a teacher's hobby kindles within her own soul set up a sympathetic glow in the mind and spirit of the boys and girls. We have tried building hobby clubs around interests of boys and girls, where no teacher could be found who was interested in that particular field, but the success of such clubs has generally been quite limited. For example, we have had a large group of boys interested in racing homing pigeons. At different times teachers have been assigned to sponsor this group as a pigeon fanciers' club but in each case the club has failed because the sponsor himself could not supplement the enthusiasm and the knowledge of the club members. On the other hand, where a teacher has a live, impelling hobby interest, he seldom finds any difficulty in interesting a group of boys and girls in his field.

Many schools, where an ambitious club program has been launched, have retreated in the face of the administrative difficulties involved. The problem of finding sufficient sponsors and the problem of placing pupils in clubs of their choice have seemed almost insurmountable. Eight years' experience in facing these problems has led to the development of some techniques which are reported here only in the hope that they may be of assistance elsewhere.

The first principle is the one enumerated above. Clubs are formed around teachers' interests and each teacher is held responsible for having or developing an interest that will attract boys and girls of the junior-high-school level. Second, clubs are scheduled as a regular part of the school program. The last period of each day is designated as the "activity period." It is scheduled from two thirty-

three to three fifteen each day. On Mondays it is the club period, on Tuesdays and Thursdays it is the homeroom activity and guidance period, on Wednesday it is our assembly period, and on Friday it is used for committee work, guidance counseling, remedial instruction, and occasionally for faculty meetings. Third, each child in school is required to be a member of a club, but the word "required" is somewhat misleading in this connection, for each child in school wants to be a member of a club. The difficulty which we face is that of establishing enough clubs to satisfy the demands of boys and girls.

Undoubtedly, the most difficult administrative problem is that of getting boys and girls into clubs of their own choosing. Formerly, we published a club list and boys and girls were asked to indicate their first, second, and third choice. After these were handed in, the administration spent hours of time attempting to get pupils assigned to clubs that would be satisfactory to them, but at best not more than sixty per cent of the pupils got into the club of their choice, and in many cases assignments had to be made arbitrarily. The following procedure has been in operation during the past three years and has proved so simple and so effective that we are able to recommend it without qualification.

1. Prior to the end of the semester each teacher gives the principal the name and the general character of the club he wishes to sponsor for the following semester.
2. The principal's office gets out a club election sheet for distribution to all homerooms, describing the clubs that will be offered and giving the name of the sponsor and the place of meeting.
3. Homeroom sponsors read the club election sheet to their pupils, discuss the possibilities with them, and give them such individual guidance as is necessary.
4. Pupils are held personally responsible for gaining admission to a club. During the first club period of the semester, and after

school each afternoon that week, teachers remain in their rooms to be interviewed by pupils who are seeking a club.

5. Club sponsors give to each pupil whom they accept into their club an admission or membership slip for his homeroom adviser.

6. At the end of the week the homeroom adviser sends to the office a list of his homeroom pupils, showing the club election of each. It is the responsibility of the homeroom adviser to see that each pupil in his homeroom is properly located in a club.

7. At the end of the week each teacher sends to the office a slip indicating the number of pupils that have been admitted to his club.

This procedure shifts the responsibility from the office to the individual pupil and his homeroom adviser for gaining admission to a suitable club. When a pupil finds that he is too late to get into the club of his first choice, he does not blame the office or society in general; he meets the situation by looking for another place. This procedure has an additional value in putting the responsibility upon the teacher of developing a club activity which will attract pupils. If only four or five pupils elect the club which a teacher is sponsoring it puts him "on the spot." It seems to indicate that he is lacking in the qualities of a teacher. Under the old routine his club was filled by the office regardless of the intentions of the pupils. Now the teacher must build up enough dynamic interest to make a club possible. Under the old routine teachers had to accept the club members who came to them. Under this routine, teachers interview pupils and in other ways promote their club so that they will have the kind of group they would like to work with.

We have found it unwise to attempt to place pupils who are in the low seventh grade in elective clubs. They lack the knowledge and experience in the school which is necessary for wise choosing, and the shift from the closely supervised class situation in the elementary school to the free atmosphere of the club adds to the complexity of the ad-

justment they must make on entering junior high school. The needs of these newcomers we try to meet in an orientation club, one for each new homeroom. The program of these groups includes an introduction to the organization and traditions of the school, exploration of the entire plant and equipment, introduction to all teachers and student body officers, and a series of problems and experiences which are designed to develop a functional command of the fundamental tool in all our social organization, parliamentary procedure.

The following list includes all the clubs organized and functioning in the school this semester:

Boys' Camp Cookery Club. This club always has a long waiting list of boys who want to learn how to cook and who want to meet Boy Scout merit-badge requirements.

Radio Club. This group has a "radio bug" as its sponsor and it attracts to it all those boys who want to make or remodel radio sets. One has to be on the waiting list a long time to get in.

Puzzle Club. The sponsor has collected a varied assortment of mechanical puzzles, trick games, and mathematical "nut-crackers."

Golf Club. This is composed of a group of a dozen girls who go each week to a municipal course for instruction and competition.

Boys' Nature Study Club. Maintains a menagerie at school and goes on Saturday geological tours. This club recently visited the fossil beds at San Pedro.

Chess and Checker Club. Includes in its membership thirty-two boys. It seldom adjourns at the close of the school day when tournaments are in progress.

Creative Dancing Club. This group has a small but growing membership. It prepares programs for afternoon teas and girls' club events.

Woodwind and String Ensemble. Gives opportunity for a small talented group of girls to enjoy a highly refined musical experience.

Travel Club. Through the medium of motion pictures, talks from adult travelers, and reports of researches by members of the group this club vicariously encircles the globe and explores many lands.

The Stamp and Coin Club. This club has never failed to find both boys and girls who wish opportunity at school to pursue a well-established hobby. There are always adults in the community who enjoy working with this group.

The *La Torre* (school paper) Business Staff. Meets as a club. The members of this group manage the business affairs of the paper and sell its advertising space. It is a highly selected self-perpetuating group.

Tumbling Clubs. This sport seems to have a strong appeal to both boys and girls. We have always had a large enrollment. These groups get their moment in the sun when the school presents carnivals, circuses, or vaudeville shows.

Librarians' Club. Composed of a group of boys and girls who manage the school library. The club period gives them opportunity to develop social solidarity and to lay their plans for the week's work.

The Model Yacht Club. Open for boys in the upper grades who show unusual perseverance in craftwork. It takes a good workman a year to plan and execute a worthy model yacht.

Sewing and Art Needlework. Attracts so many devotees that two sections have been formed. These clubs give girls opportunity to develop types of skills and to produce works of craftsmanship quite unlike those of the regular sewing classes.

Knitting Clubs. Came in last year when the knitting vogue swept the country. We have sixty girls enrolled in two clubs.

The Silversmiths' Club. Gives boys an opportunity to make Indian jewelry, bracelets, rings, and other art metal objects for the adornment of their desks.

The Clay Modeling and Pottery Club. Provides an opportunity for boys and girls quite unlike that of the art classes.

The Junior High Orators. Furnishes an opportunity for the development of forensic skills under the leadership of the school principal.

Foil and Masque, Junior High Players, and Props and Cues. These are the significant names adopted by our dramatic clubs. These three groups have a continuous record dating back seven years. They supply plays for assembly programs and each year provide at least one evening performance of one-act plays. We are never able to provide enough dramatic clubs to supply the demand.

Study Club. Provided for pupils who, of their own volition, choose to use the club period for study purposes. It is not a dumping ground for unsatisfactory club members. This year it has thirty-two members.

No club is a fixed part of the school program. It continues as long as there is sufficient pupil interest to warrant it or until the sponsor develops a new hobby which he wishes to try out with the pupils. Many clubs which have been successful in the past are not being offered at the present time. The following list of former clubs gives some indication of the variety of possible club interests: Model Airplane, Photography, Red Cross and First Aid, Sports, Drum and Bugle Corps, the Quilting Bee, Isaac Walton Club, Archeology, National Folk Dancing, Archery, Girls Social Service, Junior Puppeteers, Know-Your-Own-City, Saxophone Ensemble, Ukelele and Guitar Club, Harmonica Band, Boys Science Club, Magicians Club, Explorers Club, Ernest Thompson Seton Club, Riding Club, Swimming Club, Stage Crew.

Recreation and Youth

Arthur Henry Moehlman

Dr. Moehlman believes that we must give students the freedom to choose how to use leisure within the school. He illustrates his thesis by an interesting description of the ways in which the Demonstration School, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, gives students this opportunity.

THE POWER AGE has challenged the American people with the problem of increasing leisure time and the need for improvement in recreation. Our 125,000,000 people have more than 127,000,000 major machines, such as locomotives, turbines, and motor cars, with over one billion horsepower to operate them. We could increase output severalfold in the lumber mills, blast furnaces, and machine shops if we only used the best technical methods. Polakov in *The Power Age* estimates the possible increase as fortyfold. The photo-electric cell is even substituting for the human mind in many fields of industry, for it controls the shearing of rods in steel mills; counts the number of cars passing through the Holland Tunnel; detects breaks in continuous process manufacturing such as papermaking and stops the machinery before damage is done; and even sorts and files cards in offices.¹ The opportunity to possess abundance and leisure time seems to be at our door due to our vast natural resources and the increasing use of power machines.

In reality we need to solve many problems before this opportunity may be grasped. The studies of the Brookings Institution indicate that we were producing only 80 per cent of what we were able to produce with existing facilities in 1929, and 61 per cent of the possible output in 1934.² During the boom year of 1929 about 42 per cent of all American families were receiving incomes

of \$1,500 or less, and such an income will buy a bare living at best. This is not abundance. Furthermore, much of our leisure was cast in the undesirable form of unemployment. The Committee on Economic Security estimated that 2,000,000 were unemployed in 1929 and 10,000,000 were in like case in 1934. We may have our eyes on the stars but our feet are very much in the mud of reality.

Economic security for the men, women, and children of the United States should be the major objective of all our efforts. Political parties would do well to take economic security as their slogan rather than the tariff, the gold standard or a big navy if they wish to have the support of the mass of citizens. With security provided for we can really improve our use of leisure time. Benjamin Disraeli, in another place and day, was speaking of economic security and recreation in their necessary order when he said: "Increased means and increased leisure are the two civilizers of man." Even with this reservation in mind we must attack the problem of leisure and its use at once.

"The gradual shortening of the working day and the general lightening of the burden of excessive toil have brought in their train an increasing amount of leisure and a demand for improved means of its enjoyment."³ We have all watched the recent trend noted above and are conscious of the attempts to meet it. Workers not only have

¹ Mark Sullivan, *The Twenties* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935), p. 37, volume 6.

² Harold Glenn Moulton, *Income and Economic Progress* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1935), p. 22 ff.

³ President's Research Committee on Social Trends, *Recent Social Trends* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1933), p. 912.

more time but they are less tired by work in which automatic power increasingly assumes the burden. They need a wider range of interests and more active forms of recreation to satisfy their desires than one outlet such as reading a book in the evening. We move toward a new conception of leisure which is more purposeful, creative, and varied. People are increasingly interested in learning as well as playing and in creating as well as watching and enjoying.

Thoughtful observers have noted trends which may or may not meet these new needs. Public recreational facilities have grown amazingly but not enough. Cities have laid out playgrounds and parks and are handicapped because of the lack of green, open spaces. The republic has steadily added to the system of national parks. Travel and outdoor life have gained greater popularity with the coming of the automobile and the network of highways. Clubs and associations for recreation have grown like mushrooms. Athletic sports and games have assumed a rapidly increasing role in the lives of every one. Horseback riding and sailing are no longer the privilege of the few but a joy to many. The travel and recreation section of *The New York Times* has been recording the story of this change. Commercial amusements including the talking pictures and radio have expanded to colossal dimensions and have caused some misgivings as well as rejoicings. There is a growing interest in the creation of music, paintings, sculpture, ceramics, and other crafts as an expression of the American spirit and as a growth from our native soil. The rich future possibilities of such trends should be a challenge to all students and teachers.

In meeting this challenge of the richer, more abundant life we of the schools may do wisely to treat life as a unity made up of major activities, of which recreation is one. Our students are not living in a series of neat compartments but are dealing with the whole range of life activities in a closely woven web. Their web of life may be said to

include growth or education in its widest sense; the creation of ideas, forms, tones; communication of ideas by all language forms; transportation of themselves from place to place; the exchange of money for goods and services; the government of themselves and others; to an extent, the production of goods and services; the consumption of goods and services; evaluation of their progress and the reconstruction of their ideals, and recreation of mind and body for new achievements.

All teachers should be interested in the unity of this web of life and its steady growth although one activity may be their primary responsibility. English teachers may be primarily concerned with communication but at the same time seek to broaden student understanding of the whole life process. Physical-education teachers may have a major interest in the health and growth of the body but also interpret the social implications of conflicts which arise on the playing field.

Evidently we cannot be realists and yet attack the problem of recreation by discussing it once or twice in a classroom or by providing some time outside of the regular school hours for games and amusements. Recreation's challenge can be more wisely dealt with as a part of the student's life within the school by arranging the curriculum so as to give some leisure. We need to give our students not only an opportunity for leisure time but also the freedom to choose how to use it within the school. Such a plan of attack may give us more of the education which is life itself, not a preparation for life which we cannot predict, for recreation is recognized as a normal activity necessary to the balanced functioning of the web of life.

We have been experimenting with such a program in the university schools for three years and may have at least the outlines of a plan of attack. We have attempted to plan the school day on each grade level so that it has the flow and vitality of real life at its best. For example, an eighth-year student

may follow a sequence of activities including a unified study of the community under the guidance of social science, natural science, and English teachers; individual study in the industrial-arts and fine-arts laboratories; physical education on the field; in the pool or gymnasium; a socialized lunch hour; mathematics as a means of analyzing life; a continuation period in which unfinished work, conferences, or recreational activity may take place. Leisure time is thus provided within the usual daily schedule of each child in the lower grades (7, 8, 9) and a wide range of choice under careful guidance is permitted. George Eliot once said that "The strongest principle of growth lies in human choice." Children seem to grow more rapidly in understanding if they are aided in choosing their use of leisure time and in weighing the value of that choice.

The greater variety and number of activities in the upper-grade schedules (10, 11, 12) seem to appear with the increasing demands of individuals and institutions for specialization. Usually the amount of leisure time is cut down but we have provided general periods for recreation spaced throughout the week and at times concentrated in one afternoon. No regular classes are scheduled and teachers are free to help guide special activities. Here again we have insisted upon freedom of choice and subsequent evaluation.

Some general objectives in the use of leisure time have become increasingly clear as we worked our way forward:

1. An ability to choose worth-while forms of recreation. The inclusion of leisure time in the school curriculum with the opportunity to choose from a wide range of activities may afford real instead of vicarious experience which can then be evaluated by the student.

2. An ability to enrich an old interest. A student interested in drama may be stimulated so as to expand from acting to designing a set or staging a play. A student work-

ing with pottery may be encouraged to experiment with new glazes.

3. A tendency to search for new interests. The program of recreational activities for each student is carefully checked at regular intervals so that new opportunities are not neglected. Archery's value as a sport may be emphasized to girls who have not shown much interest in games. Photography may be presented as a new and fascinating activity to individuals who have not found a way of expressing their appreciation of the beautiful.

4. A trend toward balance and range in recreational activities. Many students tend to channel their recreational activities in one field, such as fine arts or sports. We have attempted to guide our students toward range in interest by giving them experience in many fields. Writing groups, drama groups, science experiments, research in consumer problems, reading around an individual objective, handicrafts, slide-rule instruction, a travel group, and other activities provide a wide range. Constant conferences between students and teachers make for appreciation of the need for balance. Children have frankly expressed their intention to sample many activities and to be well-rounded instead of lopsided. They like to be versatile.

5. An ability to contribute to a group recreational undertaking. Students interested in drama, fine arts, industrial arts, and music have coöperated in producing an operetta like *Trial by Jury*. A Christmas celebration has been planned and carried out each year by the entire school.

6. An ability to appreciate as well as to participate in recreational activities. The role of the intelligent spectator has not been explored sufficiently. Our students are learning to appreciate good form and talent in a play, in the glazing of pottery, in chorus music, or in a team game.

7. An ability to relax. Rest is definitely prescribed for intense and excitable students.

The value of mental and physical relaxation is steadily pointed out as the work of the school progresses. There are other objectives which could be noted but this list may serve to indicate major trends.

Our program has had some excellent outcomes for both students and teachers. They have worked together in more intimate relation upon projects of vital interest. Teachers have followed up their hobbies as they worked with a group interested in wrestling, in archery, in photography, in making musical instruments, in travel pictures, and

in dramatic productions. They have seen their students in a new light and have been observed in new roles by their students. Shy lads have found unsuspected ability in sports or in the fine arts. Boys have tried their hands at cooking and girls have learned to regard the shop as one of their spheres. They have all made mistakes but have profited from them. We seem to be making progress toward improved recreation in our leisure time because of a natural situation, more freedom to choose, and increasing skill in guidance.

Why Sugar-Coat Social Science?

Robert B. Weaver

Do you agree with the author that there has been an exaggeration of the value of "child-centered activity and play in classwork?" Mr. Weaver is a member of the social-science department of the University of Chicago laboratory schools.

DURING the past few years a great deal of attention has been given to the subject of pupil interest. Many educators have called attention to the fact that pupils receive no appreciable educative value from the study of subject matter and the preparation of exercises and activities in which they have no interest. These educational leaders believe that in order to make courses interesting to pupils it is desirable to let the pupils themselves have something to say regarding the content and activity of the courses (the child-centered school), and they suggest that the play element, defined in a broad sense, should be predominant. They point out that experts in subject-content fields fail to agree upon the subject matter to be included in courses in their respective fields, and that the relative value of the thousands of incidents that comprise a given subject-matter field has never been determined scientifically. Similarly, they point out, individual and group activities, exercises, and projects which pupils should prepare in a given course is a matter of controversy among specialists. Therefore, these advocates of "freedom in the classroom," "child-centered education," and "play-spirit emphasis" believe that the nature of the subject matter studied and the character of the pupil activities are less important than generally considered, and they suggest that pupils should be permitted to study those topics and prepare those exercises which they enjoy. It is pointed out that every content field is so vast that an abundance of interesting subject matter is available, and that the important matter is that the pupils are at work enjoy-

ing their activity rather than that subject matter, considered important by the teacher or course builder, is studied by the pupils when they have no interest in the material.

Other educational leaders believe that the classwork should be carefully organized for the pupils and that they should follow prescribed organizations. These educators point out that a sense of values emerges as the result of experience and that values, therefore, should be determined by those who have experience. They ask, for example: "Would the children of this country decide whether our government should be a democracy or an autocracy?" These educators believe that there is a present tendency to exaggerate the value of child-centered activity and play in classwork and cite such results of "sugar-coated" courses as the following:

1. Pupils fail to develop stamina or intellectual drive and become intellectually "soft."
2. Pupils in following their own interests fail to develop an understanding of the basic generalizations of the field.
3. Pupils fail to realize the satisfaction that results from the accomplishment of difficult tasks.
4. Pupils fail to understand the straightforward narrative which runs through historical courses; they do not develop a sense of continuity of an organized body of knowledge; and they do not understand the structure of society.
5. Pupils consider the subject matter which they study as the end product rather than illuminating material which is focused upon major learning objectives.
6. Pupils study material which does not contribute to their most advantageous, well-rounded development.
7. Teachers have difficulty making adequate records of class procedures and intellectual accomplishments and achievements.

8. Teachers frequently lower individual requirements and course standards.
9. Too great a diversification of subject matter and individual and group activities results.
10. Methods of work frequently become careless and pupils may develop poor study habits.

Teachers of social science are not in agreement regarding the controversy indicated above although a great deal of interest in the question is in evidence. The writer has been asked to discuss one side of the question as it relates to the field of social science by showing that social-science courses can be interesting to pupils without any "sugar-coating." It is with some hesitancy that the task is undertaken for the writer is aware of the validity of many of the arguments on the other side of the question. In presenting one side of the question he has not overlooked the fact that much can be said on the other side.

We frequently hear pupils say: "This course is difficult but very interesting"; "This course is very easy but it certainly is not interesting"; "I thought that I would enjoy this course, but it is terrible." What explanations can be given for such statements? When a pupil dislikes a course the pupil may be at fault or the course may be a poor one both from the standpoint of its organization and the teaching method employed. Perhaps there are some pupils who would never become interested in any course in social science, but this is not the case, certainly, with a very large percentage of boys and girls. Most pupils should be expected to enjoy their work in social-science courses for this field should be interesting. What makes a course interesting? At once we recognize that the personality of the teacher has a great deal to do with it. A teacher of social science should be broad-minded, interested in boys and girls, expert in his field and reasonably familiar with related fields, and intimately acquainted with the current happenings throughout the world. He should be a "good sport," and should be a real leader, admired and respected by the pupils. The writer sincerely believes that teachers who

are generally disliked by a large majority of pupils should be replaced by teachers who can meet pupils on common ground. There may be a few people in the field of education who believe that "sugar-coating" of courses makes the work interesting but the writer rejects this as an unimportant consideration. Although some pupils may think that they enjoy an "easy" course for a time, they soon tire of it and later lose respect for both the teacher who taught the course and frequently for the subject matter of the course itself. Fundamentally, the difference between an interesting and an uninteresting course in a given social-science field is a difference (1) in the subject matter which comprises the two courses, (2) in the manner in which the courses are organized, and (3) in the teaching methods which are employed in the courses. The remainder of this article will be devoted to a consideration of these three subjects.

SUBJECT CONTENT OF SOCIAL-SCIENCE COURSES

The subject content which comprises a social-science course should be selected from the storehouse of knowledge after a decision has been reached regarding the number of topics desired and the type of topics best adapted to the grade level at which the course is to be given. The decision reached by the teacher or course builder regarding these two matters will have a definite bearing upon the interest pupils will have in the course.

Number of topics. Most social-science courses contain too much material. Every field in which a course is organized is so vast that a selection of material which is to comprise the course is necessary. The amount of material which should be included in the course, however, can hardly be determined objectively. How many topics, for example, should be included in a course in United States history which is to be taught at the eighth-grade level? Who knows the answer to this question? The writer certainly does

not, but he is convinced that in many courses in the field, and in other social-science fields as well, more topics are included than can be mastered by the pupils. The inclusion of a large number of subject-matter topics which obviously will have to be considered very superficially tends to discourage the pupils and frequently results in their loss of interest. The writer examined four United States history textbooks used widely throughout the country in the eighth grade and found that they included respectively twenty, twenty-eight, thirty-one, and thirty-four topics relative to the neutrality policy of the United States prior to the War of 1812 and to the story of the war itself. This is quite a difference in the number of topics, and who knows which is the right number. Perhaps even less than twenty topics, the lowest number included by the four authors, would be sufficient to give the pupils the chief understandings of this period of our history. The writer believes that a smaller number of topics is desirable and submits the following list which includes the significant aspects of the story.

Neutrality: European war; proclamation of neutrality; Citizen Genet; XYZ Affair; avoidance of war with France.

War: quasi-war with France; war with England (1812)—causes, military events (invasion of Canada, Perry on Lake Erie, the "Constitution" and the "Guerrière," blockade on the Atlantic coast, burning of Washington, Battle of New Orleans); internal opposition—Hartford Convention; results of the war.

It is the belief of the writer that an understanding of the above topics by eighth-grade pupils would require them to do all of the work that should be expected of pupils at this grade level during their study of this one phase of our nation's history. Pupils can be interested in a reasonable amount of subject matter, but they soon lose interest in a great mass of detail. What is true of this phase of eighth-grade United States history is also true of other phases. The minimal subject content should be reduced in most courses if pupils are to be expected to enjoy their work.

Types of topics. Regardless of the amount of subject matter that is to be included in a social-science course, a selection of material must be made. The vastness of each social-science field makes this imperative. There are three bases for this selection and to ignore any one is likely to result in the loss of pupil interest.

First, the topics to study should represent concepts suited to the grade level at which the course is given, not too difficult and not too elementary. Second, the topics should relate to or throw some light on present-day institutions. Third, the topics should have educative value rather than informational value. Pupils react unfavorably to the study of subject matter which they consider too elementary or trite, and, of course, they are unable to understand and consequently lose interest in subject matter which represents concepts which are too mature for them. Educational research is needed at this point for we know very little about the proper grade placement of subject content. The wise teacher, however, will study the reactions of pupils toward subject matter of different types and will endeavor to include in his courses those topics which appear best adapted to the level of his pupils.

The second basis for the selection of subject matter needs little explanation, for surely every teacher recalls the interest of pupils when subject matter which they are studying is related to some present-day event or institution.¹ It is doubtful if social-science

¹ If a counter-chronological approach to a new subject of study is made the pupils will see very clearly that the subject matter to be studied is definitely related to the present. Such an approach to four subjects of study entitled, "peopling the nation," "winning the West," "building the nation," "coming of world power" might be as follows:

- a) The United States today is peopled by immigrants and descendants of immigrants from many different countries.
- b) The character and nationality of the people of the United States, their individualism and democratic ideals, their culture and their standard of living were shaped during the period of westward expansion across the continent.
- c) The United States today is a nation with a strong republican government that protects the interests of its people and serves them in numerous ways.
- d) The United States today is a world power and exercises great influence in international affairs.

subject matter that in no way relates to the present should have a place in the respective courses in this field. The extent to which the subject matter of social-science courses can be related to present-day events, problems, and institutions will determine in large measure the extent to which pupils enrolled in these courses will be interested in their work.

The writer considers the third basis for the selection of subject matter of greater importance than the first two bases already considered. Information should be considered the means to the end and not the end; that is, knowledge should have educative rather than informational value. Pupils become interested in subject matter when they see that the subject matter has a purpose. In so many instances they see in their course materials only a mass of unrelated items which the teacher says are important but which they consider unimportant. If the teacher were to be asked by the pupil why a given topic is important the answer would doubtless be that it is important as a matter of information. In order to have educative value subject matter must contribute to and illuminate understandings and the pupils should know what these understandings are. Interest will develop when the pupil knows that he is getting somewhere and studying subject content in order to arrive at a destination. He must know that subject matter is important as a means to an end.

ORGANIZATION OF SOCIAL-SCIENCE MATERIALS

If subject matter is to have educative value as defined above the unitary principle rather than the encyclopedic principle will be used by the teacher or course builder in organizing course materials. When the unitary principle is followed, factual material is utilized solely for its interpretative worth, rather than for its informative value; when the encyclopedic principle is followed factual material is considered to have intrinsic value as knowledge or information regardless of whether or not the material is of value in interpreting major understandings, tendencies,

, or movements. A statement of the objectives of the two types of organizations will indicate why pupils enjoy courses organized in accordance with the unitary principle more than they enjoy encyclopedic courses. The objective of the unitary course is comprehension and understanding, and the objective of the encyclopedic course is memorization or recall (Weaver and Hill, *United States History by Units*, pp. 1-8). Pupils dislike social-science work that involves a great deal of memorization, but they become interested in social-science work that aims above everything else to make them understand fundamental truths. The teacher who desires to follow the unitary principle will first select subjects which have the possibility of unitary treatment.² Second, he will analyze each subject in terms of its learning objective and elemental understandings. Finally, the subject matter selected for study will be focused upon the learning objective and elemental understandings of each of the units. Thus, every topic will have definite value and the pupils will be interested in studying in order to understand the full meaning and significance of the objectives before them. They will know *why* every item of subject matter is studied.³

When the encyclopedic principle is followed in social-science courses, which is the case in a large number of schools throughout the country, the pupils are confronted with a mass of information which they are expected to remember, and for what? Merely because it is supposed to be important as knowledge. In many cases it is unrelated and

² In United States history such subjects as: "amusements and sports"; "home life"; "intellectual life"; "travel, transportation, and communication"; "why we have English institutions"; "how we secured our National Government"; "how our National Government was tested"; "winning the West"; "how Negro slavery was destroyed"; "the coming of world power." The subject, "The English Colonies in America," would not have the possibility of unitary development for the title suggests a stage or period of the nation's history which is to be *covered* rather than a movement to be *understood*.

³ Before a unitary course in United States history is begun, the pupils may profitably read a short, straightforward narrative of our nation's past such as Tappan, *The Little Book of Our Country*. This furnishes an interesting background for the study of the units which are to follow.

seldom contributes to the development of understandings, tendencies, or movements. Of course pupils are not interested in such courses.

In order to ensure pupil interest as well as to provide a program that has educative value, teachers should organize the activity program of a social-science course so that the assignments become purposeful. Pupils enjoy preparing exercises, activities, or projects if these assignments enable them to understand something, but they do not like to do mere "busy work." If a unitary organization is used in a course it becomes easy and natural for the teacher to provide activities on a high intellectual plane which, when completed, will bring the pupils to the desired understandings. Pupils should understand that the activity, the same as the factual material, is not the end, but the means to the end. They will enjoy their work when they realize that the subject matter which they study and the activities which they prepare are valuable as means to the comprehension of the significant phases of their courses. If the subject matter or the activities are important for themselves alone, which is the case in encyclopedic courses, pupils will be uninterested in studying the subject matter or in preparing the activities.

TEACHING METHODS IN SOCIAL-SCIENCE COURSES

The teaching method employed in a social-science course has a great deal to do with the extent to which pupils are interested in the course. Monotony in a classroom is deadening to boys and girls; above all variety should be introduced in the teaching procedure. Pupils lose interest and become bored when they know exactly what is going to happen in a classroom day after day. They become tired of doing the same thing over and over again and lose interest when the teacher conducts the class period in the same methodical manner week after week and month after month.

A great deal of experimentation has gone forward during the past few years in the

field of methods of teaching the social sciences. A number of books and numerous articles have appeared, but in the majority of instances the techniques of instruction which have been advocated are adapted only to work in schools where an abundance of reference material is available. While it has been stated time and again that to teach most effectively a large amount of reference material must be provided, that it is just as essential that teachers of social science have books as that teachers of natural science have chemicals and test tubes, and that the social-science classroom should be a laboratory, yet the fact remains that the vast majority of teachers of social-science courses throughout the country do not have the necessary equipment. Many still are forced to use one textbook and it is in such courses that pupils usually lose interest in their work. In order to make the pupils interested in their work the teacher who must use one textbook should (1) reorganize the subject content of the textbook in accordance with the unitary principle considered above, and (2) provide a teaching program of undisputed educative value and with sufficient variety of activity to appeal to the interests of the pupils.

Pupils do not enjoy the lecture method or the question-and-answer method of classroom instruction usually employed in the textbook courses. A suggested program comprising six steps is offered in the following paragraph as a technique which will appeal to boys and girls. It is educationally sound and has been used in various experimental classes in Illinois and Indiana elementary and secondary schools.

The first step in this six-step procedure is intensive study. If the class is dependent upon one textbook, it is obvious that the pupils should study this textbook intensively. If extensive reading by the pupils is not done, then intensive study of the textbook is essential. The second step of this teaching procedure is analysis and interpretation. Individual and group activities, focused upon the learning outcome desired, should be pro-

vided. These activities should give pupils training in the analysis of subject content and should enable them to react to this subject content and to indicate their own interpretations. When pupils are permitted to put themselves into the work as indicated they become interested, but when they are forced to repeat memorized facts in preparing "busy-work" activities they lose interest in the course. Supervised study should be employed during this second step and a great variety of exercise material (debates, outlines, paragraph summaries, diagrams, imaginary accounts, time-lines, cartoons, pictures, etc.) should be provided. The third step is student self-testing. A battery of objective tests should be given to the pupils when they have completed the activities and they should test their own progress in the subject of study by answering the questions. The textbook may be used if difficulty is encountered although it is advisable to use this material without relying on the text. These self-tests furnish interesting discussion material for use in the next step of the procedure. The fourth step is group discussion. Alert teachers now realize (1) that discussion should be deferred until the pupils are well prepared and (2) that it should relate to activities and self-tests assigned early in the work. To base the discussion on this teaching material which is clearly focused on the intellectual objectives is to provide a straightforward narrative of the story of the subject of study. The pupils thus develop a sense of continuity of an organized body of knowledge. The fifth step is testing for mastery and the sixth step, organization and review. The final test of understanding should be focused upon the unit analysis (learning objective and elemental understandings) and not upon the subject matter. This is essential if the test is expected to measure understanding rather than the acquisition of information. Pupils frequently dislike a course because of the testing program which is provided. If they are required to "cram" for examinations that they know will be chiefly informational

in character they frequently lose interest in the work because they feel the tests are unfair and do not really measure their progress in the subject. Pupils enjoy the self-tests, and it is in connection with this work that sufficient informational testing should be provided. The final test of mastery should contain questions that measure the extent to which pupils have acquired the fundamental understandings and the extent to which they can apply what they have learned to new situations. The purpose of the organization which the pupil prepares is to indicate his understanding of relationships. It should not convey a large amount of information. A review intelligently directed by the teacher will prove to be an interesting class activity; the pupils will be full of the subject after the six-step procedure has been followed and they will be eager to express themselves. The review should be an opportunity for the pupils to discuss with each other and with the teacher the generalizations which they have developed as a result of their study. Variations in the conduct of the classwork should be provided from time to time in order to avoid possible monotony and to provide for individual differences among the pupils.

CONCLUSION

Social-science courses are interesting and valuable when they enable the pupil to understand the structure of society—the intricate relationships of people, events, and movements. This can rarely, if ever, be accomplished in child-centered courses, "sugar-coated" to appeal to pupils. A very skillful teacher might, by subtle suggestion, lead pupils to desired predetermined understandings, but this would be a definite violation of the purpose of child-centered courses. If courses in social science contain a reasonable amount of material, if they are carefully organized in terms of subject matter that illuminates intricate human relationships and shows the structure of society, and if a varied and interesting teaching method is employed, the pupils will enjoy their experience in these courses.

Directing Play as a Civic Function

Weaver W. Pangburn

"That every child in America shall have a chance to play. That everybody in America, young or old, shall have an opportunity to find the best and most satisfying use of leisure time"—such is the purpose of the National Recreation Association. This organization, supported by voluntary contributions, issues a bulletin service of suggestions regularly to six hundred communities. To the extent of its resources, it will send a field worker to help any community organize a public-supported recreation program. We are indebted to Mr. Pangburn of the NRA staff for this description of the play movement in American communities.

B RINGING UP a generation of young people given to expressive kinds of recreations and hobbies is something like raising a crop of good wheat. One needs ample acres of land, sweetened by the sun, exposed to fresh, clean air and bordered by forests and lakes or rivers. He requires modern machinery, equipment, and buildings, not too much but enough. He needs a seasoned farmer who has scientific training, shrewdness, and a sense of humor, and that farmer requires a number of competent field hands or assistants.

In brief, one cannot expect the oncoming millions of youngsters to use their leisure intelligently and creatively, to choose and follow the kinds of play that give durable satisfactions unless the community soil is prepared, good seed planted, and the crop watered and cultivated at the right time. One does that much and God does the rest. The job has about the same degree of mystery and uncertainty in it as farming.

We are accustomed to hear the Italian ditchdigger hum snatches from the operas and we conclude that the Italians were just born that way. The fact is that generations ago they had the benefit of teachers who taught them to know and love good music. This is what is taking place in the United States to a degree but under more difficult and complicated conditions and on more fronts than just the musical front.

Public recreation is large-scale farming in the cultural and recreational field. Here and there, to be sure, there is some intensive gardening and even experimental work and these phases are steadily increasing. In the main, however, large acreages and large crops are dealt with. In 1934 five million different children used the public playgrounds and 1,600,000 young people and adults enjoyed municipal golf, tennis, and other outdoor activities and patronized the evening indoor recreation centers. Public recreation gives them a rather good start in the business of hobbies and lifelong recreations. It helps them discover their abilities. It teaches them some of the skills. It develops enthusiasm and for many of them it provides ample facilities. It tries to get them started on careers of purposeful and happy leisure. These things it does in three ways.

THREE FUNCTIONS

First, public recreation acquires and develops areas and facilities where people can play and develop their interests: reservations, camp sites, parks, athletic fields, playgrounds, swimming pools, bathing beaches, picnic sites, and community centers.

Next is the administrative or organizing function. Much of our play is carried on in groups—drama groups, bands, orchestras, athletic teams, hiking, campers, dancing groups. Some people all the time and all the

people some of the time are hungry for social contact. Recreation leaders are, first of all, organizers. They suggest activities and arrange tournaments and the like and they keep the machinery of play well oiled.

Then there is the teaching function. Millions of us are still unskilled recreationally. Hence there are learn-to-swim weeks, craft and art classes, golf instruction, nature education, and other kinds of training. Thousands of volunteer leaders are being trained to become leaders in their own neighborhoods and for their own churches, clubs, granges, and 4-H clubs. The National Recreation Association has in seven years trained 26,000 rural persons in recreation methods. As many more have been trained in urban classes in social recreation, crafts, music, and drama.

As the schools increase their teaching of leisure skills public recreation agencies will reduce their instructional work except for the training of leaders.

CREATE THE CONDITIONS

Public recreation, in brief, creates the conditions under which individuals may take part in the participant forms of leisure experience. In a world of commercial gadgets where amusement is made easy at a small price the recreational illiterate needs considerable guidance if he is to choose the more rewarding kinds of activity. We must train many more thousands of competent and buoyant leaders who can make doing and creating attractive.

Yet leisure is precious and it must of all things be free. Consequently, no set patterns of organization or activities handed down from a central authority are called for. In fact, there are none in the public recreation movement. The local agencies, like the farmers, are independent. They do coöperate and they have in the National Recreation Association a clearinghouse of information on methods and philosophy, and a training center. The Association produces numerous books and pamphlets and provides field

workers and specialists in drama, music, social recreation, and other interests.

In the local programs there are variations caused by other than climatic and geographical conditions. The expressed desires and traditions of communities play a large part in determining the content of the programs of public recreation. There are pronounced variations also in sponsorship and control. School boards in some places, in others, park boards and separate recreation commissions or departments administer community recreation. Activities are similar, of course in the degree to which people in California, Maine, or North Carolina have similar recreational desires. Thus numerous activities, particularly physical diversions, are common to all cities.

LOCAL PROGRAMS

Children and young people demand much physical activity. Hence all municipal recreation systems provide sports facilities and opportunities for both individual and group games. For example, the facilities in the Minneapolis recreation system include 16 lakes, 5 golf courses, 175 tennis courts, 35 baseball fields, 13 bathing beaches, 6 handball courts, 45 ice-skating areas, 44 softball diamonds, 16 wading pools, 7 toboggan slides, 4 ski jumps, 3 swimming pools, 33 playgrounds, 26 recreation buildings, and 24 other indoor recreation centers.

Besides the activities suggested in this array of facilities the Minneapolis Park Department offers volley ball, horseshoe pitching, folk and social dancing, festivals, pageants, plays, puppetry, vocal and instrumental music, hiking, nature lore, and discussions. Supplementing the work of the Park Department, the Board of Education conducts 7 summer playgrounds.

Pasadena, 80,000 population, suburban in character, reports 23 playgrounds, 7 indoor recreation buildings, 14 athletic fields, 18 baseball diamonds, 2 golf courses, 2 outdoor swimming pools, and 74 tennis courts among other facilities.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

Arts and crafts activities which usually lead to more individual leisure pursuits than does athletics are more recent elements in public recreation programs that are growing rapidly in favor. In Mt. Vernon, New York, where public recreation is administered by a Recreation Commission, much is made of them as indeed it is in many communities of Westchester County because of the influence of the Westchester County Recreation Commission. The most popular of the handcrafts in 1934 was the making of pewter plates, bowls, and trays. Map making, etching, weaving, modeling, block printing, and the designing and printing of Christmas cards were also much in favor. A camera club, a juvenile art class held Saturday mornings from 9.30 to 12.00 under the direction of a well-known illustrator and a similar class for adults were other features. The juvenile class attracted 85 boys and 127 girls who engaged mainly in copy work from pictures and illustrations and charcoal drawings from casts. The adult class enrolled 40 men and 127 women, who undertook life drawings from models. There were 300 boys engaged in woodworking.

Mt. Vernon has a choral society and a symphony orchestra, horseback riding, archery, dramatics, dancing of all kinds, community centers, and numerous playgrounds. It has organized thousands of its citizens in sports. The total attendance in activities in the city increased from 96,000 in 1925 to 514,000 in 1934. This enormous increase is fairly typical of hundreds of cities.

UNDER SCHOOL AUSPICES

Milwaukee, among the larger cities, offers a notable example of successful public recreation under school auspices. Many details of its program were described in an article by Eugene T. Lies in the April issue of this magazine. Lakewood, Ohio, also is a representative example in the population group ranging around seventy thousand. In addi-

tion to athletic fields, baseball diamonds, ice-skating areas, stadium, tennis courts, and swimming pools, the Board of Education operates seven indoor recreation centers three evenings weekly for twenty weeks. Twenty-five hundred different individuals engaged in gardening, 2,000 in nature recreation, 2,000 in swimming, and 3,400 in handcrafts in 1934, among other activities. The gardening project is closely correlated with classroom instruction in the spring and autumn. Lakewood conducts a day camp for junior-high and elementary-school children, the activities embracing swimming, horseback riding, hiking, dramatics, constructive trips, athletics, and discussions on current topics and good books. Folk dancing, drama tournaments, plays, festivals, and puppetry are also included in the program in this city.

HANDCRAFT

This is one of the commonest activities on public playgrounds. It employs wood, leather, tin, iron, brass, copper, clay, soap, waste paper, cloth, rope, and other mediums. Cast-off crating, tin cans from dump heaps, and old rubber tires are utilized. Furniture for the home, handbags, costumes, model airplanes, sailboats, kites, and lanterns are but a few of the hundreds of products of the handcraft program.

NATURE ACTIVITIES

The construction of nature trails has developed notably since 1929. Oglebay Park, Wheeling, West Virginia, has a trail under the charge of a trained man from the University of West Virginia. Cincinnati and Washington, D.C., have trails under similarly well-qualified directors. In Springfield, Massachusetts, the Museum of Natural History supplies leadership to the park department in connection with the latter's nature trails. In Buffalo the Museum of Science conducts a school in trail building to which various organizations send selected men and women for instruction. In 1932 these men and women constructed six nature trails in

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Buffalo city and county parks. New Haven, Connecticut, Cleveland, Ohio, and Reading, Pennsylvania, are a few of the other cities that are extending their nature-trail facilities. There is a constantly increasing interest on the part of the public in such natural-science studies as botany, ornithology, and geology, in public park and recreation systems.

Camping, which frequently leads to permanent outdoor hobbies, is more highly developed by the public recreation agencies of California than by those in any other State. Los Angeles has five mountain camps; Oakland, 5; Berkeley, 3; San Francisco, Sacramento, and Fresno, one each. Other cities having municipal camps are Detroit, Highland Park, Michigan, Seattle, Ogden, and Salt Lake City. Both the Westchester County Recreation Commission and the Park Commission conduct camps. These camps provide extremely inexpensive vacations for the citizens of their respective communities.

OTHER INTERESTS

One could go down through a long list of activities and relate what cities are doing. Archery is promoted by 125 municipalities. One third of a million tennis enthusiasts play on 10,000 courts. There are 200,000 folk dancers. Puppets delight juvenile audiences in 128 cities while plays, serious and otherwise, are regularly staged by 350 municipal recreation departments.

Much is being done to bring out the music, dances, and crafts of the foreign born in our cities. Cleveland has done this successfully in its All-Nations Exposition, its series of folk plays, and its folk music concerts. Boston Community Service in connection with municipal holidays has been cultivating such talent in a similar way for many years.

Swimming, one of the most popular of American sports, enrolled 3,000,000 individuals last year and in northern States much is made of skating, skiing, ice boating, tobogganing, and hockey.

To conclude, public recreation is steadily acquiring park and play areas, constructing facilities, urging the school authorities to throw open their buildings to public use, teaching the public the elements of recreation skills, encouraging young people to choose participant recreation, and drawing great numbers into activity through organizing service. This work is inclusive. It aims to reach all the public. Millions are being served, but more millions await more adequate facilities, more generous city appropriations. This business is at its beginning only.

Many of the pamphlets published by the National Recreation Association will be of interest to teachers and others who direct recreational activities in school or community. A list of such publications may be secured by writing to the Association at 315 Fourth Avenue, New York, N.Y.—*ED. NOTE.*

Taking the Curse Off Examinations

Mary Elizabeth Conklin

Imagine a teacher with such a worth-while professional hobby as that implied in this title! Miss Conklin not only makes English examinations fun for the students of Milne High School, the laboratory school of the New York State College for Teachers at Albany, but also trains teachers in this happy technique.

DO OUR CLASSES approach examination periods with resignation, with trepidation, or with active aversion? Have we accepted the look of woe as the inevitable reaction to the announcement of an examination, or can we replace that look and the attitude it reflects by some sounder psychological response?

Of course, as teachers, we realize that much of the real value of examinations lies in the preparation for them, rather than in the results, but do our students appreciate this? For that matter, how many college students really accept any such view? (And should you think that such an attitude is confined to the young, the thoughtless, or the ignorant, listen the next time you find yourself on a summer-school campus near the middle of August!) Too many students, young and old, still think of an examination as that institution where the teacher tries to figure what the student does not know and then ask him all about that.¹

Can we not bring every class to the place where it meets an examination at least half way—not necessarily with a wild-eyed enthusiasm, but with a willing acceptance of this as another way of learning, of doing the job at hand? Frequently this will involve a change of existing attitudes, but we *are* teachers, and changing attitudes is our business.

Why do children dread examinations? Often it is because we, as teachers, insist

¹ Of course, no student of yours would have any such idea, but—

upon their doing so. "This will be on your examination; you will be sorry if you don't learn it." "We are having a test tomorrow." And the tone and the look accompanying the announcement say plainly, "Now I shall find out how much you don't know." Our whole attitude as we give out the papers too often says, "Oh, but this is a serious business; you must all work until you are worn and weak and it will be very unpleasant."

Many a child dreads examinations because they are preceded by a day or two when he is supposed to "review" without much idea of how to go about it. His teacher and his parents all insist that he ought to be getting ready for the dread event. He feels so himself—but how is he to go to work?

One procedure is to work out with a group that the examination has a more important purpose than to put a mark in the teacher's class book (necessary as that may be at times)—that, first of all, it ought to be useful to the student taking it. Why cannot a class help plan what ought to be tested—not *how* it ought to be tested—but *what*? Try a period where the subject for discussion is, "What ought to be on our examination for this unit?" It is a review device that most classes enjoy. A variation of the general idea is to have one group plan an examination for another section.

A possible first step then is the planning of the examination with the class—partly as a means of good review, partly as good psychological preparation, attitude building in other words. The accomplishment of this

step includes a recognition on the child's part that any examination is of value particularly to him, not to his teacher.

After this, the next important consideration is establishing in the mind of the student that the examination will be utterly fair, that, if it does not seem so at the moment he is writing, he can still be sure matters will be adjusted later. No student can take any satisfaction from an examination if he doubts in the slightest degree the justice of it. Is there anything undignified in such an approach as this: "My intention is to be perfectly fair about this: if there is anything that does not seem so to you, do the best you can and don't worry about it. We will straighten out all difficulties later. There is nothing tricky about this examination; it is an honest attempt to give you a chance to put your best foot forward."

However, in spite of good preparation and a feeling of confidence as to the teacher's good intentions, there may still remain a certain amount of tension for some students. A good examination ought to be so interesting to write that the student forgets himself in the writing. Test the degree of your success by watching your next group as they write your examination. Do they look eager, alert, busy? An occasional chuckle (not loud, but deep—Macbeth in reverse) is an excellent sign. A group that sits and frowns, and sits some more, may be taking a thought-producing examination—a good one. It may be, but the chances are that it is taking just a boring one. A really good examination is almost sure to make students say they enjoyed taking it. A mediocre one they finish and leave.

Tests ought to give, at least to the good students taking them, a sense of power achieved or developing. Think a moment. Have you not taken examinations that sent

you out of the room saying to yourself, "I never really thought of that before—not that particular aspect of the affair—but what I said is true?"

Then may we take the following as sensible criteria for judging our examination procedures:

1. A good examination is an interesting one; an excellent examination is almost fun to take.
2. A good examination makes the writer think; an excellent one makes him surprised at the quality of his own thinking.
3. A merely respectable examination lets the student know exactly what is expected of him—and how much is expected of him. (In other words, he has a right to know how credit is divided among questions. Often it is his only way of gauging how large a proportion of his time ought to go to a particular question. Ought there not be a definite relation between the amount of credit awarded to a question and the amount of time it takes to answer?)
4. A good examination ought to be short enough so the person taking it does not become mentally or physically breathless. "It was so long I didn't have time to think" is a frequent indictment brought by students against examinations.
5. A good examination ought to go home with the student so that he may fill in the gaps in his knowledge at the moment that he is most interested in such gaps. (Did you ever try mimeographing two copies of each examination? This device has particular value in the case of a long objective-type examination.)
6. A good examination ought to throw the high lights of a unit or course into relief.

We have put the curse on examinations. Who else can take it off?

Hobby Booklist

Thelma Eaton

Hobby books at one time may have been considered "extras" in the library. Today besides being used by students in their club activities they are part of social studies and English reading. This list has been compiled by the librarian of Milne High School, Albany, New York.

Bechdolt, Jack. *The modern handy book for boys.* Greenberg, 1933.

Describes and illustrates a great variety of things that boys like to do and like to make. Includes camping, collecting, conjuring tricks, toy making, marionettes.

Butler, E. P. *The young stamp collector's own book.* Bobbs-Merrill, 1933.

The author, attempting to tell boys all they need to know about stamps, produces an interesting and informative book. A list of places will help the amateur with his geography.

Calkins, E. E. *Care and feeding of hobby horses.* Leisure league of America, 1934.

A pamphlet stressing the value of hobbies to individuals. Fifty pages are devoted to the long classified bibliography which lists books relating to 218 possible hobbies.

Collins, A. F. *Making things for fun; a how-to-make book for boys and girls of all ages.* D. Appleton-Century, 1934.

Includes everything from paper airplane gliders to radio receivers.

Collins, A. F. *How to ride your hobby.* D. Appleton-Century, 1935.

A manual of hobbies. Useful for the person who wants a hobby to ride but does not know just how to begin.

Faulkner, H. W. *Wood-carving as a hobby.* Harper, 1934.

Simple explanations for the beginner. Contains good discussion of tools, woods, and techniques.

Ficklen, B. A. *A handbook of fist puppets.* Stokes, 1935.

Specific directions for making fist puppets and practical directions for producing puppet plays.

Gaba, Lester. *On soap sculpture; concerning its history, technique, and style.* Holt, 1935.

Simple books for amateurs with clear-cut rules and patterns for making soap figures. Gives photographs of completed figures and suggests various uses for soap sculpture.

Hamilton, E. T. *Complete model aircraft manual.* Harcourt, Brace, 1933.

A most complete book with diagrams and instructions for building many types of airplanes.

Hamilton, E. T. *Popular crafts for boys.* Dodd, Mead, 1935.

Interesting information about numerous crafts with directions or plans for articles in each group. Leather craft, tin-can craft, wood carving, book-binding are among those crafts that are included.

Irving, John. *Knots, ties and splices.* Dutton, 1934.

A revision of an older book by J. T. Burgess. "A handbook for seafarers, travellers, and all those who use cordage." Subtitle.

Kinscella, H. G. *Music on the air.* Viking press, 1934.

A book written as guide for those people who wish to make music their leisure time enjoyment.

La Berge, A. J. *Boats, airplanes, and kites.* Manual arts press, 1935.

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Post, J. H., and Shirley, M. J. *Selected recreational sports for girls and women.* Barnes, 1933. A book for amateurs which discusses deck tennis, horseshoe pitching, badminton, table tennis, shuffleboard, clock golf, paddle tennis, and tether ball.

Spaeth, Sigmund. *Music for everybody.* Leisure league of America, 1934. Attempts to suggest as many ways as possible to increase enjoyment of listening to music for the average hearer. Contains calendar of important musical dates from 530 B.C. to the present.

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Strong, W. M. *Photography for fun.* Leisure league of America, 1934. A careful, nontechnical discussion of photography as a hobby. Discusses equipment, taking pictures, and printing them. Contains a list of photographic terms with definitions.

A Study of the Junior-High-School Assembly

Nina A. Heller

Without making too low a bow to the status quo, we are pleased to have some assurance concerning what constitutes current practice in this rapidly changing field. The following article informs and interprets. That is, the author does not pretend to have the objective attitude of the researcher in a pure science, but sees education as an applied science which allows her a vigorous bias in favor of "progressive principles."

AT THE PRESENT time a majority of the adolescent youth of America are receiving their life training under the guidance of the formal school. Consequently, many of the formal and artificial influences are being broken down, and more attention is being given to activities that are inherently social. In a broad sense, good citizenship is the real objective of all educative undertakings.

Nothing can equal a good assembly for supplying life situations in which a student has a favorable chance to practise and try out the idea he is learning. Friendliness, tolerance, and respect for authority are somehow acquired through the assembly. Some one has said: "Right attitudes are caught, not taught." The assembly, properly directed, furnishes life situations, unifies the school, reveals new vocational and avocational desirabilities, interests the community, widens the student's horizon, and contributes to a more valuable citizenship. The assembly is the "hub" of all school activities.

School people have listed what should take place in the assembly and what they believe happens to students as a result of their participation in the activity, but these educators have not investigated the actual situation and determined what happens to students participating in the school assembly. Although it may seem difficult to produce tangible evidence, yet certain results seem rather definite. Many of the aims and

purposes for the pupil's participation, as set up by educators, have been partially realized according to the results of an investigation made by the author recently. The 70 schools participating in the survey represent junior high schools ranging from three hundred to over fourteen hundred students in enrollment. The schools, which were selected at random, are from 34 States.

The investigation revealed the following data concerning:

1. The present status of the administration and other practices in the assembly
2. The content of the assembly programs on the basis of usage
3. The evaluation of the practices, the content used, and the benefits of pupil participation as expressed by pupils in personal letters to the writer.

ADMINISTRATION

The administration of the junior-high-school assemblies is predominantly in the hands of the homeroom teachers in the schools where there is no director of activities. The survey reveals that the programs are planned and sponsored by a teacher or a teacher-student committee. This would lead one to believe that more teachers are training for this phase of extracurricular activities and that more responsibility is being given to them by the principals because of their efficiency in the work. In the absence of a director of activities, the principal, or a com-

mittee of which he is a member, must approve or reject the suggested programs. The executive power of the principal enables him to know the various departments and teachers of the school and to act as a check upon the sponsors who are less efficient.

In the case of regular program making, considerable foresight is required. Programs planned for the semester will provide a more balanced program for the year. The data reveals that 40 per cent of the 200 programs submitted by the 70 junior high schools were planned a month in advance. The additional 24 per cent made out a week in advance, no doubt, commemorated special days. In the case of special-day programs, the events to be commemorated suggest what the nature of the activities should be, and it is comparatively easy to determine the types of programs the audience will enjoy. Programs which are an outgrowth of club or classwork are frequently scheduled only a week in advance, but are the products of a much longer period of work.

The tendency to entrust students with administrative responsibility is apparent. The survey reveals that approximately one third of the programs presented were partially or entirely planned by the students. This figure, although yet too low, shows that progress is being made along this particular line of training. In comparing this study with a similar study of the senior high school made by P. D. Remy¹ nine years ago, we find that 113 per cent more junior-high-school students are now receiving an administrative type of training.

It is evident that educators are becoming increasingly more conscious of the necessity of training pupils for intelligent leadership. In 84 per cent of the cases studied, the presiding officer was a student. There are numerous advantages in having a student chairman:

1. It gives students a chance to learn by

doing: (a) The chairman is given an opportunity to train for capable leadership. He thereby shares in responsibility, which is fundamental in the development of character. (b) The audience has an opportunity to develop into faithful, intelligent, co-operative followers, with an interplay of responsibility, and the spirit of teamwork.

2. In the larger schools, where students are unable to become acquainted with all of their classmates, it enables the student chairman to become better known throughout the school.

TIME USED BY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS FOR ASSEMBLY PURPOSES

The allotment of time used by the junior high schools for the purpose of the assembly activities is one index of the degree of importance attached to them. Of the 70 schools reporting, 71.5 per cent have a period 40 to 60 minutes in length weekly. In comparing the above figures with those of Remy's investigation, previously referred to, the author finds the allotment of time to be very similar in junior and senior high schools.

THE PRESENT STATUS OF OTHER PRACTICES PERTAINING TO ASSEMBLY PROGRAMS

Many noteworthy practices have grown out of the assembly. It is of interest to know that schools generally agree upon numerous practices.

As to the scholastic requirement for participation in assembly programs, it is evident that administrators agree that students who are poor scholastically derive benefits from participation, as well as do those who are in good standing—benefits of which they should not be deprived. If it is the aim of the school to develop leadership, as well as citizenship, throughout the student body, it is well agreed that all students can learn best by doing. Consideration of the fact that in nearly seventy-five per cent of the schools every student has a privilege to participate in programs during the school year establishes the conclusion that the students who are low in

¹P. D. Remy. *A Study of the High School Assembly*. Unpublished master of arts thesis, Colorado State College of Education, Greeley, Colorado, 1926.

scholarship actually do take part and are thereby given leadership training.

In approximately three fourths of the schools parents and guests are given special invitations to attend the programs. Thus, additional training in citizenship is given the student through his contact with the guests. It is not the youth alone who derives benefit, for the school also may be selling itself to the community.

The author found that amazingly few schools keep a systematic record of student participation. In the seven tenths of the schools that do not keep a complete record of students' participation in the programs, one is led to surmise that students who are natural leaders are prone to appear too frequently, thereby crowding out the timid or otherwise handicapped pupils. Since it is the custom of the schools to distribute the privilege of participation on a democratic basis, it is reasonable to assume that a systematic record properly used would aid in distributing the privilege of participation to a much larger number of students.

The practice of installing student officers in the assembly is well established in the schools. As the installation of officers is a common practice in the life of the adult, it is necessary that the youth of our schools be given the practice of participating in a like situation.

Classroom and clubwork are being used in the assembly at the present time. The data secured reveals that the English, music, physical-education, and dramatic classes produce most of the class materials which are presented in the assembly. The question might arise as to why there are so few assemblies on science, social science, journalism, and other subjects taught in school. These fields offer excellent opportunities to present interesting and worth-while programs. The assembly should be made a practical laboratory in which to follow up the work offered in the classroom. Nearly every department in school can make use of this technique. It has educational possibilities as yet untapped. It

can give new life to subject matter once thought by students to be unrelated to life.

PRACTICES USED IN OPENING THE ASSEMBLY PERIOD

The custom of using a formal opening prevails among many schools at the present time. The flag salute and devotions are used most frequently. The fact that the flag salute or color ritual was used in 46 per cent of the programs leads one to assume that educators believe that saluting the American flag is the first step in teaching citizenship. It is a known fact, however, that in some communities influential patriotic organizations prevail upon the administrators to open all school programs in such a manner. Regardless of that, it is reasonable to assume that educational leaders believe students should be able to salute the flag in an unquestionable manner.

Opening a meeting with devotions is, no doubt, a relic of the dim past, a carry-over from the old chapel form of assembly, which was religious in character. However, the fact that 31.5 per cent of the programs studied were opened with some form of devotions is rather significant, because nine years ago, according to Mr. Remy's² study, the devotional period was tabooed. With approximately one third of the schools using devotions in the opening of the assembly period, one is led to believe that the tendency to use some form of devotions is on the increase throughout the schools of the country. One might question whether or not the content used for the devotions is religious in nature. Upon examining the themes of the programs and considering the special days and weeks celebrated, the writer can readily see that the devotions need not necessarily have been biblical in character. No doubt songs, beautiful poems, or appropriate readings constituted the greater part of the content used in the devotional period.

Announcements were made in 165 assemblies out of the 200. Of this number, 49.1

² P. D. Remy, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

per cent were made by the principals, an equal number by the students, and 1.8 per cent by faculty members. In a recent survey on controversial issues regarding practices in the junior- and senior-high-school assemblies of the United States,³ it was found that the principals in both schools were undecided as to whether or not announcements should be made in the assembly. In view of the fact that educators have not reached a decision on this point, it is evident that they are using the old method of making announcements in the assembly, rather than resorting to the method of conveying the same message to the student body through a bulletin.

Introductions hold a regular place in the opening of the assembly in some schools. The fact that 70 speeches were made on the 200 programs recorded would establish the importance of training students in this practical art of presenting a speaker to a group.

Of the 70 speeches made, 62.8 per cent were given by guest speakers. It is generally agreed by the principals⁴ that an outside speaker should not appear on a program unless he has something especially important to contribute. No doubt some schools are making use of guest speakers because they do have some especial contribution to make. The writer is prone, however, to believe that many of the guest speakers have been "pinch hitters," because approximately one fourth of the programs studied were planned only one week in advance.

THE PRACTICES AND THE CONTENT USED IN THE PROGRAM PROPER

The assembly is the principal's supreme opportunity to meet his entire student body and to guide his students toward the development of an audience behavior, which is so often needed by young people when they meet in public places. In order to do much

for the individual child and to secure the right relationship in the school, all programs must be carefully planned, well prepared, and varied in nature.

"Music, at least on the appreciative side," says Dr. Fretwell,⁵ "is of value to every one." The use of instrumental music 125 times and vocal music 97 times in the 200 programs, together with the incidental use of music in songs, demonstrations, devotions, and tableaux, establishes the fact that the program committees are utilizing much of the musical talent available in their schools. In 99 of the cases, the musical numbers were presented by a school organization or a group of students. This large pupil participation, together with the audience participation in 85 school songs, reveals that all students are given an opportunity to participate in music in some form or other.

The programs of today have educational and inspirational merit, and are planned primarily to observe a special day or week. Christmas is celebrated more frequently by the junior high schools than any other holiday. Thanksgiving ranks second, with Halloween, Armistice Day, and the February anniversaries following very closely. No doubt most of the programs are given on special days or weeks, because it is easier to obtain suitable material and less time is required to plan and prepare such programs.

The geographical location and the State history occasionally colors the programs presented by the various schools. Navy and Roosevelt Day, Constitution Day, and the safety programs reported were all presented by schools located in cities on the Atlantic Coast. Child labor was the theme of a program given in a school located in one of the large industrial centers, while programs on Japanese flowers and Chinese customs were reported by schools on the Pacific Coast. Programs commemorating the lives of James Whitcomb Riley and Frances E. Willard

³Christine K. Wells, *A Study of Some Controversial Issues Concerning the Assembly*. Unpublished master of arts thesis, Colorado State College of Education, Greeley, Colorado, 1935.

⁴Christine K. Wells, *op. cit.*

⁵Elbert K. Fretwell. "Improvement of Extra-Curricular Activities," *The Journal of the National Educational Association* (May, 1933), pp 159-160.

were held in an Indiana and a Kansas school, respectively. Other themes were general and varied and, therefore, have no significance except in relation to the particular school in which they were used.

DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN PRESENTING ASSEMBLY PROGRAMS

Preparation is the keynote to a good assembly program. In spite of much planning, many teachers are handicapped in the all important duty of preparing and presenting the assembly programs. The greatest difficulties arise from having no definite time or place for practices. Since approximately one half of the schools provide a period of from forty to sixty minutes weekly for the presentation of the programs, and since the principals generally agree that a good assembly is as important as a class period, is it not logical that as many handicaps as possible be removed? There is no doubt in the writer's mind that many obstacles involved in practice could be removed if the practice period was included in the regular daily schedule, thus attaching the same importance to it as is given to any regular class.

Audience behavior, one form of citizenship, is receiving considerable attention among the schools. Programs are being presented to develop audience behavior, as well as to benefit the students who are participating in the programs on the stage. If the audience can be taught friendliness, tolerance, openmindedness, the courtesy of laughing with people, and the rudeness of laughing at them, the assembly is invaluable.

THE CONTENT PREFERRED BY THE JUNIOR-HIGH-SCHOOL AUDIENCE

The junior-high-school audience tends to choose activities having predominantly a literary and a personal appeal. The same fact holds true about the selection of program material. Plays and skits are generally preferred by the junior-high-school audience. The fact that the young adolescent is

more immature and idealistic would account perhaps for his choosing plays with romance and action. Music, which is the second choice of junior-high-school students at the present time, was also the second choice of the senior-high-school group nine years ago. It is significant that both the older and younger students hold this choice in common.

THE PARTICIPATION PREFERRED BY THE JUNIOR-HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENTS

Nothing can equal the assembly for supplying a practical laboratory for effective pupil participation. The adolescent youth is idealistic. He aspires to imitate and thereby gets much satisfaction out of participating in plays. The fact that students like to participate in plays as well as to see them presented should encourage the presentation of more plays in the assembly. Since one half of the plays used in the assemblies at the present time are original, one would surmise that there is a dearth of material suitable for the young student.

It is of interest to know that the junior-high-school audience prefers music in various forms second to plays. Those who are especially talented musicians not only enjoy performing in that capacity, but also receive pleasure in observing the performances of their classmates.

THE BENEFITS DERIVED FROM PARTICIPATING IN ASSEMBLY PROGRAMS

We do not need less of the curricular nor less of the extracurricular, but a more careful evaluating of the results of each. Observers of adolescent youth believe that the character-forming influences coming out of the give and take of the well-planned assembly period are greater than those growing out of the somewhat artificial situation of the classroom.

That educators are planning for the whole school life of the students as well as for the life of the whole school is obvious in this study. The majority of the programs were

presented to teach as well as to life it of corre The best cope wi they are today. The assembly the cons senting stage fr poise, de

presented to observe a special day or week, to teach citizenship, and for entertainment as well as for educational purposes.

The correlation between assembly participation and the adjustment of the students to life itself is evident, although the degree of correlation may be somewhat uncertain. The best proof that students will be able to cope with life situations tomorrow is that they are able to cope with their problems today. To evaluate the benefits derived from assembly participation, the author consulted the consumers—the students. Students presenting the programs agree that overcoming stage fright, acquiring self-confidence and poise, developing speaking ability, and learn-

ing to assume responsibility are the outstanding and most evident benefits received. For those students participating in the audience and on the stage they believe the assembly period develops coöperation and teamwork, broadens the vision, creates self-pride and school loyalty, and acquaints the students with life situations.

Although many of the aims and purposes of the assembly, as set up by the junior-high-school writers, have been only partially realized, educationally alert principals and teachers should be even more interested in the great potentialities for molding adolescent character which exist in assembly participation.

Vitalization of Subject Matter Through Guided Pupil Experiences

Daniel C. Knowlton

For a good while now we have been vitalizing subject matter. But it does not stay vitalized. . . . Perhaps it is vitalized teachers we need most; then the subject matter will be vital. Professor Knowlton of the School of Education, New York University, is himself a vitalized teacher, and he discloses here some of his own tricks of the trade.

IMPORTANCE OF EXPERIENCE IN THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

THREE IS a very real problem implied in the word "vitalization." It suggests the experience of that prophet of Israel who so many centuries ago looked out over the valley strewn as far as eye could reach with human bones. "And they were very dry," says the narrative. "Can these bones live?" came the query. The answer was soon forthcoming. To the accompaniment of "a noise, a shaking," and a wind, a mighty transformation followed. "The sinews and the flesh came upon them—the skin covered them—the breath came into them." "An exceeding great army" of living men stood before him.

Here is the body of subject matter which represents the core of our school curricula—and it, too, is very dry. Can it be made to live? Back comes the answer, Yes. But it will have to be subjected to a transformation almost as radical—and one perhaps accompanied by upheaval. When there has finally been breathed into it life itself, that breath of life which is identified with human experience, a similar miracle will be witnessed. For it is only the "breath" of experience which can communicate the life-giving element which will make subject matter live in the person and life of the learner. Life begets life.

The future of the junior high school—its very existence as a link in our school system—depends upon its effective use of experience. For education in its largest and most

vital aspect may be defined as communicating in effective fashion the worth-while experience of the race. These experiences may be direct or vicarious. It is in this latter form that they usually make their contribution to modern education. The problem is that of bringing the child as close to a given experience as possible.

SUBJECT MATTER IN ITS RELATION TO EXPERIENCE

In the first place the subject matter itself should consist either of a body of experiences, or be directly derived therefrom; that is, if it is to have any real value as instructional material. If it consists, as is so often the case, of a body of concepts, these concepts have meaning and validity only as they issue from a number of experiences through which man has passed to attain to his present outlook and command of the world about him. His tendency to experiment is but a testing of his ideas in the light of actual experience. They are validated for him when he feels satisfied with the results of this experiential contact. This does not mean that he ceases to launch out into the unknown. But in the last analysis it is on the basis of what he has actually experienced, that he takes the plunge. The young student must follow more or less the beaten path which his progenitors have trodden before him. It is only by fixing the landmarks there that he may hope to carry the culture and achievements of his generation to a higher

level. This is merely to remind us of the fact that any "vitalization" process is primarily concerned with extracting from this subject matter its experiential elements, or recognizing their presence there in the work of the classroom.

But a difficulty often arises right here. Too much of the subject matter of our curriculum consists of concepts and generalizations which have been entirely divorced from the human data upon which they rest. It is merely a body of formulas. The task of the teacher seems adequately performed when the formulas have been communicated rather than actually apprehended. They are but a set of talismans, imperfectly understood at the best, and usually misused. When these "open sesames" are applied to actual situations, as has been done time and again in our own day and generation, they demonstrate their utter futility. For we are not living in the world described in the pages of the *Arabian Nights*—as some people seem to think.

THE ACTIVITY PROGRAM IN ITS RELATION TO EXPERIENCE

In the junior high school it is possible to take advantage of the child's expanding range of interests—of an outlook on life which is very much enlarged. It is the inevitable accompaniment of the age. He is gripped with the spirit of inquiry. It is a part of the insatiable curiosity characteristic of adolescence. The eye and the emotions are the main avenues through which he contacts the world and reacts to it. Life is very much a succession of thrills. This is another strong argument for a program containing a large experiential element. Before the advent of the junior high school, contacts with new learnings were made through the academic element in the program—through a body of highly formalized subject matter, usually made available in textbook form. Too many junior high schools are still under the influence of the older tradition. They lack the courage of their convictions, in re-

placing to a greater degree formal cut-and-dried textual materials with actual experience. This is the real issue involved in the so-called "activity" program which is very much misunderstood and badly applied.

BASES FOR SELECTING EXPERIENCES

But there are some experiences, notably in the social-studies area—and that means in the area of "living"—that cannot be really grasped by children of this age, no matter how ingenious the teacher. There should be a clearer recognition of these limitations. They would be appreciated more readily if the work of classrooms was dictated less by the adult outlook and by the adult contacts of the teacher and school administrator. Too much of our program is under the spell of the whole secondary curriculum and is still a "whittling down" of college work to the level of the young and the immature.

Not only are the programs, in the field of the social studies, formulated with an eye on adult concepts and on adult experiences (toward which young pupils can only move by degrees), but the same would hold true in general science, in language, and in other fields. Great areas of enrichment are being neglected altogether—areas well within the experience of these youngsters—in a vain striving for the unattainable, or for that which, once grasped, seems to possess but slight meaning to its would-be possessor.

Contacting the rich many-sided life of America past and present as a glorious reality is just as vital—nay more so, at the junior-high-school level—as to attempt to enlist these youngsters in the great adult battle of "problem solving." They become better problem solvers, when the time really comes for battling with the conditions about them, because of their familiarity with life as it has been lived, in its many aspects, all contributory to a better understanding of man and so of man's problems. Imagination must be cultivated when imagination is present and active. Information *as such* never did any one, except the technician, any good.

With all others it is an elusive possession at best. I am bold enough to say that the great treasure house of man's experiences in the past to be found in the pages of history, with many of its significant traces all about us, with its revelation of what man is and what he may become, is being seriously neglected for the chaff of half-baked propositions and the will-o'-the wisp of concepts which even adults find difficult to grasp.

My plea, then, is for more experience as a basis for the education of these young people—not the disembodied ghosts of a number of concepts, however much they may seem to be in line with our present order or however attractive they may sound. Let us start with subject matter embodying experience—rich experience, meaningful experience—and many of these concepts will take care of themselves. They will not need to be so carefully isolated or so precisely stated. Life has never really been apprehended through a set of formulas however carefully evolved or nicely phrased. We actually lay hold of it as a bit of living which makes its impression upon us because of its apparent identification with life itself. Such a fragment of life arouses in us a response which may not always be embodied in a well-defined principle or idea.

DEMAND FOR REALITY IN AN EXPLORATORY PROGRAM

In that part of the school life which is looked upon as essentially exploratory in character—as the junior high school is usually interpreted—this would appear to be the only effective way to open up new avenues of knowledge and reveal the alluring vista of the world as it is. This purpose is often defeated by the failure either to select from the field to be visited those areas which parallel life, or to present them in terms that are intelligible and at the same time challenging to the pupil.

What most junior high schools need is a greater element of reality injected into their programs and into the work of the class-

room. This is but another way of emphasizing experience. The same criticism could be made of other parts of the school program. It is perhaps the major emphasis of the recent report of the Commission on Social Studies of the American Historical Association as the result of their five-year survey.

May I take a leaf out of my own experience to illustrate this absence of reality. In the early days of the present effort to set up social-study programs in terms of adult problems, such as wages, standard of living, public ownership of utilities, social security, and the like, it fell to my lot to organize and teach a group of ninth-grade pupils in a demonstration class at one of our larger summer schools. Although I soon discovered that I had the children of parents to whom these were real issues I likewise discovered that a realistic handling of these was exceedingly difficult, if not impossible. They were clearly conditions or problems outside their real interests, scarcely impinging upon their life experiences. They were living the life of children. These areas were not those that appealed to them or that promised satisfaction and enrichment. They were a part of the depressing drab surroundings from which they would free themselves by penetrating the more alluring areas of that many-sided life which was all about them.

NEED FOR GREATER SENSITIVITY TO WORK OF CLASSROOM

Personally, I grow increasingly sensitive in the work of the classroom to reactions of this kind and am constantly asking myself: What of this particular subject matter and its presentation? Does it fall within the area of the experiences of these boys and girls, supplementing them or presenting a real challenge to their own living? Am I really appealing to the child—leading him out to discover for himself something which impresses him as worth while because it is so close to life—to his own life and his present interests? Does it represent an experience which he can appropriate and appreciate?

Although it is almost axiomatic that you can teach anything to children, in practice, this is not always economical. The only avenue through which you can really reach junior-high-school pupils is that presented by their own lives as they have contacted or are prepared by their years to contact the desired area or concept. This can only be done through its external and concrete phases. These may be a long way from the inculcation or appreciation of the concept desired or desirable. Only the fringes may be touched and these may have little to reveal of what lies at the real core or center. There are no short cuts to real learning. An attempt to build up a body of knowledge limited by strictly pragmatic considerations is nothing more or less than a sacrifice of real learning to the parrot-like rehearsal of facts.

I repeat: the best way to contact life is to live it—to live it richly and gloriously, and this is essentially the problem of the junior high school. The ideal set up by the Commission on Social Studies of the American Historical Association is the cultivation of a "rich and many-sided personality." Much of this ideal may lie at the basis of a junior-high-school program of studies without being realized in the work of the classroom. The purpose here is to point out some of the ways and means whereby it may be realized, drawing upon the teaching of social studies merely for the purpose of illustration.

SEEING AND HEARING EXPERIENCES AS CONTACTS WITH SUBJECT MATTER

Barring direct contacts with life by actually living it, there is no more effective instructional material than that represented by the photograph, the motion picture—in the form of newsreel or photoplay—the radio, the slide, the map, chart, poster, etc.; in short, the range of visual and auditory (or sensory) material to be found in such quantities in the world about us. It has been characterized as "the seeing experience." To this should be added "the hearing experience."

These materials, particularly the motion picture, are almost fragments of experience itself; by their very closeness to that experience serving as links to bind together the new experience and the old.

But curtailment of school budgets has seriously handicapped the contribution which such materials have to make. The lack of some of this material makes it difficult to induct teachers into its effective use. And they need this preparation badly. We shall be forced, then, to turn to the simple and readily available forms of concrete material. Even here the teacher will be challenged as to her real ability to "implement learning" as the new pedagogy has it. It calls for real teaching skill to use effectively a textbook illustration or a newspaper cut.

Thus far our attention has centered primarily on the subject matter actually selected and its relation to experience. This is essentially the province of the curriculum maker. The subject matter may be lean; it may overemphasize concepts and formulas; it may be remote from actuality and experience; fortunately it is still within the power of the teacher to make these dry bones live. Here lies the challenge.

THE TEACHING CYCLE AND MOTIVATION

There is a simple principle involved here which in my experience with hundreds of teachers (both those with and those without classroom contacts) is too often overlooked. It is that of seizing upon the thing of the present or the actual living experiences of the child and through them contacting the new and the untried; completing the educational "adventure" by returning finally to the starting point, pausing here long enough to experience that keener appreciation of the immediate "landscape," which ought to be the ultimate contribution of such an educational excursion. This landscape always includes a vista.

The problem involved is often regarded as merely one of effective motivation. So far as it involves the really effective use of experi-

ence it is much more. The experience of the child, or the motivating element, serves as a lever by which he becomes receptive to the subject matter—but it should do more. It has made its full contribution only when identified with the new experience or with those other parts of experience which up to this time have not entered the child's consciousness or formed a part of his own living. It may serve its purpose by being set off against it.

In making some of these observations and comments a bit more concrete, I would like to draw upon a few of my own classroom experiences. Those that I am about to select are recent and are all based upon the teaching of portions of my own book¹ to a very average group of eighth-grade children.

May I insist that in this book my selection of subject matter throughout has been made with a view to the experiences which I believe should be communicated, recognizing at the same time those present in the life of the pupil. But as I have already insisted, this should be the principle underlying the selection of *all* subject matter, no matter what the field. It is the dominant motif in the work of the junior high school as more than any other segment it is especially designed to contact actuality as embodied in life itself.

TEACHING THE MACHINE AGE

My first illustration is in connection with the teaching of the machine age. It is a concept that we would all recognize as an important one in its bearing on the world of today. How shall the boy or girl contact it? It is a concept involving time—representing more or less a distinct period or stage in American and in world development. It has the most far-reaching implications. Technological unemployment is an illustration. As an age of which the pupil is a part, it presents certain difficulties. By virtue of this very fact much of what it includes is taken

for granted and has unconsciously entered into the warp and woof of his life and is not to be readily disentangled therefrom or isolated.

To realize the fact of this change and its continuing influence, beginning back in the 1900's, the pupils were reminded of their own ages and their own life lines. The teacher represented these on the blackboard as they were supplied by the class. The composite result was the "age" of the class. From this consciousness of life and its early experiences, as for example, going to the photographer's and having a picture taken, or one's first automobile ride, the teacher proceeded to the life lines of the fathers and mothers, which projected back into the early 1900's. The contact with the machine was made through the well-known automobile, reading from a newspaper a brief description of Mr. Taft's ride to the scene of his inauguration. The prancing horses drawing the carriage, according to the description, gave the driver some trouble. The strange thing about this experience—strange in the life of today and therefore to the group—was the use of a carriage on such an occasion. It was quickly followed by the idea that this was the last time a President was driven to his inauguration behind a span of horses. By 1909 the automobile had come and it was one of the many signs of the coming of the machine age. From this point on through photographs, cartoons, and present-day contacts with the machine, the experiences of the group were linked up with the larger "racial" experiences, for that is what they really were. Later on a carefully planned visit to the Museum of Science and Industry was undertaken where the actual machines themselves, or working models of them, still further ministered to the experiences already appropriated.

TEACHING THE "TRUST BUSTING" ACTIVITIES OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT

There is no question but that the trust situation in Theodore Roosevelt's day pre-

¹ Since We Became a Nation, in collaboration with Mary Harden (New York: American Book Company).

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sents a real problem to the classroom teacher. There is, however, an aspect of this which reduces it to terms which fall within the pupils' experiences and understanding. In opening up the topic the instructor read the following passage without indicating its origin:

In those days the Mount of Cornwall was kept by a huge giant named Cormoran. He was eighteen feet in height, and about three yards around the waist, of a fierce and grim countenance, the terror of all the neighboring towns and villages. He lived in a cave in the midst of the Mount and whenever he wanted food he would wade over to the mainland, where he would furnish himself with whatever came in his way. Everybody at his approach ran out of their houses, while he seized on their cattle, making nothing of carrying half-a-dozen oxen on his back at a time; and as for their sheep and hogs, he would tie them around his waist like a bunch of tallow dips. He had done this for many years, so that all Cornwall was in despair.

The class were asked to identify it. They were questioned as to the impressions such a description made upon them when they first heard it, to what extent they believed it to be true, etc. This was followed by showing them cartoons of the 1900's showing Opper's bloated figures and Homer Davenport's giants with the remark that about 1900 such figures began to appear frequently in the newspapers. Apparently people thought that there were still giants abroad in the land and were looking for a Jack the Giant Killer to get rid of them. Who were these giants? Where did they come from? What was done to get rid of them? Did Jack appear?

Through questions of this sort this favorite classic of childhood, with its impressions, can readily be linked up with the strange experiences that form so large a part of our history at the turn of the century. Theodore Roosevelt becomes Jack the Giant Killer, and as the pupil becomes better acquainted with him—especially through his

relations with his children—the whole story takes on reality and interest. The contact with the trust problem continues to be made through these interesting and challenging cartoons.

Other champions appear to fight "Cornwall's" battles. Their slogans are readily identified with the slogans familiar to the adolescent and he begins to appreciate their accomplishments.

SUMMARY

In conclusion then, it would appear that this desired vitalization of subject matter in the junior high school may be realized if adequate consideration be given to each of the following.

1. The curriculum itself as represented by the subject-matter element must actually embody human experience; it must be built upon a body of rich experiences. The curriculum must be interpreted essentially as a body of experiences in its relation to junior-high-school students.

2. The curriculum must draw less upon academic material and more upon activities. These are but a part of the life to be contacted—actual fragments of that life.

3. "Seeing" and "hearing" experiences, as represented by the motion picture, radio, and the like, are particularly appropriate instrumentalities. They call for teaching techniques which are not yet well developed.

4. There must be a recognition in the classroom of a "teaching cycle" starting with the concrete external aspects of the life of today, from here reaching out into other areas, never losing sight of the starting point; to return finally to the life of today with a learner gripped by a new impulse and possessed of a larger vision.

5. There must be a better appreciation of motivation and a greater sensitiveness on the part of the teacher to the atmosphere and work of the classroom.

The Diagnosis and Treatment of Secretarial Discourtesyitis

Harry C. McKown

Dr. McKown, editor of School Activities Magazine, is widely known as one of the outstanding authorities on the subject of "extracurricular" activities. He goes places and sees things, frequently piloting his own plane. In his spare time he "collects" graveyards—flies around the country spotting abandoned ones from his perpendicular perspective, and copies into his notebook the unusual data he finds carved on headstones. You can never tell where he will turn up next, and we hope your school secretary is polite when he calls on you.

DURING THE past twenty-odd years we have been visiting high schools in all parts of the country, 150 of them within the past eight months. During these years we have noticed great improvements in high-school buildings and equipment, organization, curriculum, teaching materials and methods, activities, and other phases of the school's life and work. However, one very important phase of secondary-education progress toward improvement has been lagging—office treatment of visitors.

The high-school secretaries we have met (some five hundred in number) were of all kinds and denominations—male and female, old and young, tall and short, fat and lean, dark and light, efficient and inefficient, attractively dressed and atrociously so, courteous and discourteous. This dissertation concerns only the last mentioned type—the discourteous. These are not in the majority, but there are too many of them.

Common cases of discourtesyitis, on the basis of secretarial reactions, may be classified in several ways, one of which is that indicated below. In the interest of a rapid and successful recovery (or early demise) the appropriate treatment for each case is also suggested.

1. "Yes?" The secretary suffering from this type of malnutrition is usually at some distant part of the office or is seated at a far desk. If the former she does not come

over to the counter, and if the latter she does not rise from her work. Rather, she looks up and in a bored manner shouts her query in a voice that would eminently qualify her for easy entry into the county hog-calling contest. There is only one treatment for this malady—a vociferous and enthusiastic "No!" A slight variation of this type of erysipelas is, "Well?" for which there is also but one remedy, "Quite, thank you!" Either of these reactions should drop the patient into a nice, refreshing sleep.

2. "Did-je-wish-something?" The proper remedy for this foolish question (number 897654567800981) is, "Why, yes, I did; but I cannot remember now just what it was." If the symptom is a plain and simple, "Something?" prescribe a plain and simple "Nothing!" As a result, the C. Q. (Courtesy Quotient) of the secretary should begin to be reorganized on a convalescing New Deal basis.

3. "He's-busy-now: sit-down-in-that-chair." The first dose for this form of sleeping sickness is always the same—"Thank you, I'll wait for him." However, from this point on there are two possible treatments (and the visitor must be very certain to use one of them in connection with the first). These applications are: (1) "But I won't sit in *that* chair: I'll sit in *this* one," or (2) "If I sit down I won't grow tall: so I'll stand up." This may cause the patient's death.

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If so, call the undertaker and start a hunt for a courteous secretary.

4. "I-don't-know-where-he-is: sit-down-over-there." It will be noted that the second phase of this conniptic is somewhat similar to the second phase of that indicated immediately above. However the treatment is considerably different. The proper medicine is for the visitor to recall a patriotic air that helped to make the world safe for democracy, sit down with aplomb, and sing with great gusto,

Over there, over there, over there,
The Big Shot he is busy
His Secretary's dizzy
She cannot find him anywhere;
Up the stair, down the stair, don't you
care,
If he's in or if he's out, don't tear your
hair;
For we'll be setting, we'll just be setting,
And he won't come back till we've set
down over there.

This should resuscitate the secretary and she will immediately be all en rapport.

5. "*Whadda-yu-want?*", or "*Whadda-yu-want?*", or "*Whadda-yu-want?*" The proper prescription for myopic imbecility, with the emphasis properly placed to fit the symptoms, is "I wanna pension, a Rolls-Royce, a country estate, and plenty of time to sleep." Shorter treatments, though not always recommended, are "I wanna bucket of smoke," "I needa toothpick," or "Oh, I dunno, whadda yu got?" Following this treatment the patient should become deliriously balmy.

6. "Wha-je-wanna-se'm-about?" This form of dementia praecox is a defense mechanism for the protection of His Majesty. In order to cure or kill this patient just say nonchalantly (or at least in a sweet and bromidic manner), "Well, I'd like to ask him about tomorrow's weather." Other well-known remedies are: "I am interested in knowing the extent of his belief in the saltatory theory and how we can make the boon-

doggling neurones hop faster?" or, "Oh, I dropped in to tell him that his mother-in-law just died and left him a pink silk shirt." Any of these cures will put every one at ease, pronto.

7. "Wait-till-we're-through." This form of epilepsy is somewhat different from the others in that nothing at all is said, at least for the present. The secretary and a couple of teachers, and maybe some student assistants, are busily, very, very, busily, engaged in an important conference about the weather, Johnny's latest prank, a new dress or haircut, the Dionne quints, or something else of international significance. The "Don't Disturb" sign is hanging out. Sometimes it is, "In Conference." Take your position, talk to yourself, laugh with yourself, shake hands with yourself, and maybe, even, pat yourself on the back. The conference will be immediately broken up and the patient will, if you continue the treatment, break out in a glorious sweat.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

1. The courteous high-school secretary is the rule.
2. But there are far too many exceptions.
3. The principal's secretary is far inferior, in courtesy, to the superintendent's.
4. The courteous secretary treats all individuals as children, rather than as younger and older men and women.
5. The secretary is the school's contact-point with the community. Is she important?
6. A school courtesy campaign should, if necessary, begin with the secretary.
7. We have never had discourteous treatment from student "information-suppliers" in high-school corridors.
8. Special training is given administrators, teachers, engineers, janitors, and custodians—why not secretaries?
9. We are not irritated personally by discourtesy, only professionally.

Editorial

WHY I THINK SCHOOL IS FUN

A group of seventh-grade students of Milne High School, Albany, New York, were asked to write whether or not they thought school was fun. These are some of their unedited essays.

In my opinion all of school is work, but it is done in such a form that it seems like fun.¹ As in social-science class we do subject projects as separate groups and then discuss them in class. When we read a story instead of writing a composition on it we voice our opinions in class.

In English class we read our compositions or poems and the class votes to see which is best.

In mathematics class each row finds their average and then we find out which row wins.

—CARROLL BOYCE

Some teachers have the idea that a dull routine is best. I think that is entirely wrong. When a subject is dull then children do not pay attention, and get restless. Other teachers have a different view of the matter. That is the way our teachers are.

In our school we have a very good time in our studies. These are some of the reasons:

1. In social science when we work on projects we work in groups, not alone.
2. In English we make newspapers and present plays.
3. We choose the athletics we wish to take.
4. We have different clubs in which we can choose which one we wish to belong to.
5. We are allowed to choose almost everything we do.

Altogether school here is sometimes more fun than work.

—LEAH EINSTEIN

I think school is fun because of the way the teachers have of teaching the different subjects. *They make it seem in ways as a game instead of work¹* as some teachers do in other schools. Some days it is work and is meant to, mostly when there is a test about due which is only natural. You can't expect fun all the time.

—SHIRLEY SMITH

I like school because I think it is pleasure and recreation mixed with interesting work. Shop, I like best, because it is pleasure and also preparation for real home carpentry. In English we have projects, plays, and a little work. In general science

¹ Italics ours.

we study what we eat, breathe, in fact everything vital to our existence. Also we have projects, class meetings, and committee work in social science. Altogether I think school is 90 per cent fun and 10 per cent work.

—BORDEN MILLS

I think school is fun for many various reasons. One is that when you are doing work it is put in such a way that makes it most interesting, such as working on projects. Or a certain story that you're studying, you act it out in play form. *And the methods used in teaching seem to make work a lot of fun, and the teachers are all very nice.¹* The athletics or gym keep you active in your favorite sport, and the clubs keep you doing something in your hobby or something else you enjoy.

—MARILYN TINCER

CHECK CAREFULLY, PLEASE

We believe your future as a teacher hangs in the balance.

1. As a principal, would you want your students to feel and say that attendance at your school is fun and just like play? Yes No
2. As a teacher, would you want your students to feel and say that your subject is fun and just like play? Yes No
3. As a teacher, would you like your students to feel that their club meetings are play and their subject recitations work? Yes No

Do your answers read Yes, Yes, No? They do? Then we can hear you saying that of course you know (as every good teacher knows) that good teaching is enjoyed by students and that pupils often do extra work for no other reason than for fun. Blessings upon you. If all principals and teachers were like you we would not be writing this article, but—

Of the two hundred some teachers who checked the above questions 74, or 36 per cent, thought that school should *not* be fun; 61, or 30 per cent, thought that subjects should not be fun; and 42, or 21 per cent, wanted students to feel that club meetings were play but subject recitations were work.

Granted that the questions may have been poorly phrased, that they may need qualification, the fact remains that the teachers who did not want their classes to be like play

would probably look askance at the picture of the play school which we believe to be the school of the progressive present and the everyday future.

THE PLAY SCHOOL—WHAT IT IS *not*

Perhaps those who think the play school is wrong differ with us in definition. Perhaps they think we mean a school where pupils "fool around" rather than play. To them a play school might mean a school without a purpose—a school where pupils flutter from one job to another and use the ensuing confusion to "enjoy" talking about things which have nothing to do with the classwork.

We do not blame any one for condemning such a school. Far from its being a play school, we feel it utterly removed from the play spirit. In fact, we question whether the pupils in such a school enjoy themselves. "Fooling" and wasting time do not seem to satisfy anything fundamental in students.

THE PLAY SCHOOL—WHAT IT IS

If you teach in a play school, you will recognize its description. In fact, if you have

ever been inside its doors, you will know it—a school where pupils come not only willingly but delightedly, a school where doing math problems is fun, a school where visiting the Children's Court, far from being extra work for extra credit, is instead an activity to be chosen in preference to some other play project; a school where pupils *and teachers* look happy, a school that opens up its arms and welcomes you into its busy, exciting activities which every one is having fun doing.

Until each teacher realizes that work which is vital to children is fun and that happy leadership is not only possible but preferable, education will fall short of what it can be. And until each administrator is brave and skillful enough to understand and to guide teachers in the conduct of busy, play activities (which may look different from the old-type classroom activities but actually are none the less purposeful), each administrator will be checking up against himself the deprivation of a day of successful, happy living \times the number of students in his school.

H. H.

Convention Announcement

THE annual convention of the National Vocational Guidance Association will be held at the Coronado Hotel, St. Louis, Missouri, February 19 to 22, 1936. The Association will focus its attention on the adjustment of youth, under the theme "Guidance and Personnel Responsibilities in the Youth Program of 1936." While consideration will be given to the functions, techniques, and problems of vocational guidance, the program will revolve around spe-

cial meetings devoted to the following topics:

1. Vocational Guidance Aspects of Youth Programs
2. Youth Looks at Guidance
3. Community Responsibility for Guidance
4. The Organization of Vocational Guidance at Home and Abroad
5. Curriculum Revision to Meet the Needs of Youth.

Material Review

John Carr Duff

This special issue of THE CLEARING HOUSE dedicated to the element of play in education is most appropriate to the principles represented by this monthly department of the magazine. The Christmas display of toys and other materials that might be adapted for valid educational uses in school was the editor's inspiration for the following article in which a number of representative items are appraised.

FOR THE benefit of those who are only now discovering this new department of THE CLEARING HOUSE a few words of explanation are in order. We have recognized the importance of the raw materials with which students in the modern school educate themselves. We have seen clearly the relationship of this material to the teacher's method and the learner's achievement of skill, knowledge, and attitudes. And we have set up criteria¹ by which to appraise through practical school use the potential value of selected items.

"Materials," as the word is used in this department, does not include printed matter—it does not include pamphlets, workbooks, or any of the other items frequently referred to as "instructional materials." We are concerned here with items that may be manipulated, shaped, assembled, or in other ways controlled by the learner so as to provide an experience in which there is in a greater or less degree the element of creation. It is through creative experiences—they may be in abstract media as well as concrete ones, of course—that the individual is most likely to acquire the will to create and the techniques for effective creation. And these, we assume, are fundamental for citizenship in a changing civilization.

In our general speech habits the term "toy" is frequently used with a disparaging connotation. The word is converted into a verb that has the same belittling quality:

¹ Cf. "Appraising Learning Material," THE CLEARING HOUSE, September 1935.

"She was only *toying* with his affections." The term "play" is similarly used sometimes as a word charged with approbrium, and the compound, "play-toy," is a colloquial expression spoken by virtuous country people with an inflection inferring a wide range of contempt. "You git those play-toys out of yere, son, and git daown to work," the backwoods boy is told when his preoccupation with his own experiments distracts him in his performance of his chores.

But we are fully aware now of the place play occupied in the life and development of the child. Play is rehearsal for adult life—indeed, this concept is in the very root of the word, for the old Anglo-Saxon term from which it stems meant a game and a fight—a fight which was not in earnest but only a practice one, a sparring match in preparation for other real fights to follow.

So it is with toys, with playthings, that a child must practise, and this is increasingly true as the technological nature of our culture removes the child farther and farther from the real world. The pioneer child met the world face to face, a very hard world. He cut wood, carried water, had a child's share in a great many of the activities through which his family attained a modicum of security against the rigors of primitive life. But the modern child, especially in towns and cities, is denied any share in the real struggle. Whatever he learns must be in the artificial world of playthings—the toys and games of his nursery, the material and apparatus provided in the school.

It would be claiming too much if one said

that the kind of toys a child has determine what kind of a person he will be. But the toys a child has, and those he lacks, unquestionably have a deep and lasting influence in shaping his outlook, in developing attitudes. If we were clever enough we might read in the toys our youngsters are using today the possibilities and limitations of the world they will make when they are grown men and women. If you doubt this, then you have not considered how much alike in their lust for power are the small boy with his toy "Tommy gun" and the childish, but not quite innocent, thug with his real gun that sprays real death.

Fortunately, the world tomorrow, even if it depended entirely on the character of the toys in use today, would not be utterly ruined. For there are a considerable number of playthings and workthings allowed to children which are enough on the positive side to serve as antidote for a good many toy Tommy guns, tanks, and disintegrator pistols. In shopping for this department—the articles reviewed here are not run-of-mill, but represent a fair degree of selection—the problem is made a little more difficult by the fact that *THE CLEARING HOUSE* is published for and by secondary-school people, and articles reviewed here ought to have some significance in the education of youngsters in the high-school grades, the seventh through the twelfth.

Youngsters of every age are Indian-minded, so it was with some assurance that we procured from the Plume Trading and Sales Company² a kit containing all the stuff necessary to make a Sioux war bonnet. Getting the feathers and other parts all processed and assembled, even with the help of a rather detailed direction leaflet, takes a good bit of time, a lot of care and patience, and some skill. But the result is something to remember!—a real Indian "hat" that recalls everything you ever knew about the

barbaric splendor of a man's size Indian chief in full regiments. This is only one of the many items of Indian gear this company offers, and they are not so expensive but what most schools can afford to have some of these authentic reproductions made up in class for the school costume chest, the dramatic wardrobe.

The same company provided us with an "Apache Beadwork Loom" and the beads necessary to make an ornamental headband or hatband. This craft has unusual possibilities, for it offers an opportunity for creativity in the selection or design of a pattern that expresses the individual taste of the worker, and the finished job has a universal appeal. It is hard to explain the reason for the general interest in beadwork, unless it is the romantic appeal it has for us, the way it recalls quickly our common interest in the lives and customs of a race of people that we have come to understand sympathetically several generations after we have completed the business of taking their forests and their prairies and driving them into the ocean.

It is too late to give the country back to the Indians, but it is possible for us to adapt and save some precious elements of their culture. In our modern educational "hack-a-lack" we might say that to know Indians we must be Indians, and anybody who gets about much knows that, from the third grade to the ninth, there are more Indian villages today than Columbus could have found here one October morning over four hundred years ago. Plume Trading and Sales Company publishes an interesting pamphlet that will delight every teacher who has thirty cents worth of imagination—buckskin shirts, medicine bags, drums, rattles, painted robes, sign language, picture writing, beadwork, basketry, tepees, totem poles, dances, and songs. The Boy Scouts, the Girl Scouts, and the Campfire Girls have for a long time been borrowing from this rich field. But you junior-high-school teachers, you do not know a war club for a coup-stick; and you have let the elementary schools capture all

² Plume Trading and Sales Company, Inc., 10 West 23 Street, New York City. A catalogue and price list will be sent on request.

the Indians for their own use. Some day I hope to read about an eighth-grade class or a tenth-grade class that has gone native for at least a whole semester, with full benefit of all the romance, and all the fun, and all the knowledge that could be derived from such an experience well planned and well executed under the supervision of competent teachers who were themselves not above a few feathers and an occasional war whoop.

Weaving is another craft the Indians practised, but it is only incidental to their culture and it is root and branch of our own. Happily, it has been rediscovered by the schools. A combination of factors—the great interest in antiques and folk arts, the lessons derived from rehabilitation work with convalescent soldiers, and the expanding influence of the Southern folk schools—all these have given impetus to weaving. In another issue we hope to review some more elaborate material for this craft, but the Gabriel loom^{*} will furnish an interesting experience in weaving for pupils of any grade. It is too simple for any but beginners, but the principles involved in weaving are the better illustrated on that account. Colored wool yarn is supplied with each loom.

For variety we offer an item that is completely un-Indian and has nothing whatever to do with folk crafts. It is "Konkrete Bild-M-Up."⁴ It is a kit providing all the tools, gadgets, materials, and instructions necessary for making concrete blocks—concrete blocks for building one's own reproduction of the Temple of Karnak, a Romanesque basilica, a setback skyscraper, or the local railway station. Any one who has built with blocks knows the distinct pleasure incident to building with stone or concrete ones. (Take a note on the aesthetic importance of tactile experiences in education!) The Bild-

^{*} Samuel Gabriel Sons and Company, 200 Fifth Avenue, New York City. There are four looms, priced at 60c, \$1.00, \$1.50, and \$2.50. The company issues an interesting catalogue of books and games, principally suitable for young children.

⁴ Northwestern Products, St. Louis, Missouri. Sets list from \$1.00 up, and "Konkrete" lists for fifty cents a bag.

M-Up kit makes unusually fine blocks, for they are hard and durable, especially if they have been allowed to "cure" properly, and they can be tinted with color, they can be nailed or glued together, and they can be sawed or carved! This, certainly, represents great versatility in blocks.

I find one natural limitation in the Bild-M-Up: Boys who are old enough or skillful enough to do a good job of making the blocks may be too old to enjoy using them. (I say "boys," but there is no reason why girls might not enjoy making blocks, or doing almost any of the other things boys are allowed to do; the differences in their interests are almost all due to conventions traditionally imposed.) In our school this should offer no great handicap to the use of material of this nature, for we shall have the older boys at Edgemont School make blocks for the pupils of the lower grades to build with. And when I get time I am going to write a thesis on the importance of providing more situations of this kind, more opportunities for the older pupils to assume a big-brother relationship to the younger ones.

CHROMIUM FOR THE CLASSROOM

It has been more than a decade now agrowing, this interest in the possibilities of sheet metal for creative design. These possibilities are nowhere better exemplified than in the distinguished work of Rebajes, whose shop on West Fourth Street, New York City (that's in the heart of Greenwich Village) is delightful to visit if you have a kindred feeling for metal, copper especially, and a reasonably sophisticated taste for subtleties of design.

Many concerns are offering material easily adapted for classroom work in sheet metal. I say for *classroom* work. I mean by this emphasis that it is a great virtue in a material that it may be used in the ordinary classroom without any such elaborate equipment as the studios and shops afford. Indeed, in all these reviews I am looking for material which can be used effectively in the home-

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room, or in the home, or in a camp. This adaptability will not disqualify it for use in the special room—the "noisy room," if you have a room set aside for making things, or the art room, or the metal shop. One of the criteria by which we must appraise educational material is the degree in which it may provide an interest that the student can follow up. If it is a material that requires special machinery or tools not commonly found at home, then there is small likelihood that it will provide this follow-up.

"Apollometal"⁵ requires for its effective use no tools more elaborate than a pair of scissors and an ice pick. These are included in the kit we received, which includes also a metal punch, a brass-edged ruler, a sheet of chrome metal, and an attractive direction book. The book was prepared by A. Marotti Robsy and contains many interesting suggestions for the use of sheet metal in making useful and decorative novelties.

Our experience with this craft has been too limited to entitle us to write with much authority on its possibilities. But our experiments with Apollometal have indicated that it can be used with remarkable effect by high-school students who have the skill for firm, decisive draughtsmanship. That is, the pictures, or designs, or whatever you draw in metal are not easily erased or corrected. The point of the ice pick is used to draw lines on the "wrong" side, the dull side, of the metal sheet. The lines are drawn heavily so that they appear raised on the bright side. The picture, to be framed or mounted on a plaque, is good in proportion to the simplicity of the design and the skill with which it has been drawn into the metal. The effectiveness of the finished plaque depends also on one's interest in a picture rendered in metal, the peculiar aesthetic response some people enjoy on contemplating the smooth, cold surface of a flat metal object. . . . It is difficult to explain convincingly, but it works that way.

⁵ Prices and information: Apollometal Arcraft Company, 853 Broadway, New York City.

A stout pair of scissors cuts this sheet metal nicely if it is silhouettes in shining chrome that you desire. You might attempt some flowers, or better, some conventionalized animals, after the manner of the frogs and fish and mice Rebajes has made. "Metal Arcraft" is a fine field for adventure. Weaving and the other folk arts may appear effete when practised in the shadows of our chromium-plated skyscrapers; but there is something in the character of Apollometal and other materials of this kind that recommend them as appropriate for craftwork in the urban high schools.

"I CAN'T DRAW A STRAIGHT LINE!"

In spite of the obvious pleasure some of us have in freehand drawing, there are others who would rather take a beating than try to draw a simple picture of a simple object. Whether it is because they are deficient in some "natural" talent, or because—which is more likely—they have had some unhappy early experiences with drawing, these people are badly in need of a prop for their self-confidence whenever drawing is involved.

Perhaps the "Grapho-Scope" will serve as such a prop, though I know that in recommending it I incur the enmity of a large number of art teachers and others who subscribe to a dogma of freehand-or-nothing. The Grapho-Scope you have probably seen in the stores—it has been featured for two or three years now. But you probably have not seen it in the schools. And yet there are some reasons why it is to be recommended for school use.

The "Grapho-Scope"⁶ works on a simple principle, simple but rather difficult to explain. The student sits in such a position that he can see into the peep-hole of a prism-and-mirror gadget supported conveniently on an adjustable brass rod. On the table in front of him, about ten inches below the prism, he has placed a sheet of white paper.

⁶ Model No. 25 costs \$2.50. Made by Federal Stamping and Engineering Corporation, Brooklyn, N.Y. Circular on request.

When he looks into the peep-hole he apparently sees, projected onto the white paper, the reflection of whatever picture he has placed in front of the prism. With a pencil or crayon he may trace quickly around the illusory projection to make an accurate copy of the picture he is using as an original. . . . It is apple pie to do—children of six and seven can use it quite well—but it is subject to many uses by accomplished draughtsmen and artists too.

It is immediately apparent that there are definite limitations to a machine designed to provide mechanical assistance for copying. But this does not invalidate the Grapho-Scope at all. Artists, especially those sometimes referred to contemptuously as com-

mercial artists (aren't they all?), use more mechanical aids than you have any idea of. The pantograph, projectors of all kinds, cameras—all these are mechanical devices that the artist employs as frequently as they will help him get more quickly or more accurately some effect he wants. The Grapho-Scope is a kind of projector, though the projection is illusory, a psychological phenomenon in the field of optics. Its use is valid whenever its limitations are observed: by itself it will not help one to become an artist. But it provides a trick-of-the-trade your student artists will be pleased to employ sometimes; and it allows, for the unartistic person, a new type of experience in drawing where success of a kind is guaranteed.

Major Issues in Junior-High-School Education

The editor cordially invites your suggestions for this department. If you are a teacher and know about some new material or apparatus that should be reviewed here for our readers, write us about it. If you are engaged in designing or manufacturing or distributing educational material, or toys and games that have educational value, we shall be glad to have you send us circulars.

CALENDAR NOTE

The Twelfth Annual Junior-High-School Conference will be held at the School of Education at New York University Friday evening and Saturday morning and afternoon, March 13 and 14. "Major Issues in Junior-High-School Education" is the central theme of the conference.

The Friday evening general session will consist of a panel discussion of the topic, "A Consideration of the Objectives of the Junior High School in the Light of Recent Social Trends." A prominent educator will be the principal speaker and his address will be followed by a panel discussion by six well-known schoolmen. Previous to the panel pro-

gram, the Men's Glee Club of the School of Education will render a half-hour program. Following the general session there will be an informal reception and dance.

At the Saturday morning general session there will be a challenging address by an outstanding educator on the topic, "Behind the Educational Smoke Screen." An excellent band from one of the junior high schools in a New England city will inaugurate the Saturday morning program.

Following the Saturday morning general meeting there will be seventeen round-table discussion meetings where significant issues in junior-high-school education will be thoroughly discussed and ideas exchanged. The panel topics are as follows:

1. Vitalizing the Social Studies in the Junior High School
2. The Integrated Activity Program in the Junior High School
3. Providing a Vital Educational Program for the Dull Child in the Junior High School
4. A Suitable Program of Pupil Guidance in the Junior High School

5. Providing a Challenging Curriculum for the Gifted Child
6. The Problem of Articulation of the Junior High School with the Senior High School
7. Administrative Problems that Arise in Connection with a Progressive Program in the Junior High School
8. Problems Relating to the Training of Teachers for Progressive Junior High Schools
9. Organizing the Small Junior High School to Provide for the Varied Needs and Interests of Its Pupils
10. Creative Supervision in the Junior High School
11. The Development of Social Responsibility in the Junior High School
12. Progressive Substitutes for Traditional Report Cards and Marks
13. The Educational Implications of Creative Expression
14. The Exploratory Function of the Junior High School
15. Maintaining the Mental Health of Junior-High-School Pupils in a Period of Social Change
16. The Junior High School As a Community Center
17. The Junior High School of the Future

The present plan for the organization of these groups calls for only one prepared speech which will bring out the issues to be considered and emphasize a point of view.

This prepared speech, about twenty minutes long, will be followed by an informal panel discussion by the ten panel members under the direction of a chairman. The panel will be allowed a specific allotted period. Then the subject will be thrown open for discussion to all those in attendance. It is assumed that the general discussion will last about an hour. The procedure will provide extensive opportunities for the free exchange of mature opinions by practitioners in the junior-high-school field. The program contains vital topics, efficient chairmen, challenging speakers, and outstanding panel members. Over two hundred educators will participate in the conference.

By special request, one round-table discussion group will meet Saturday afternoon. The topic for consideration is "The Problems of Narrow Specialization versus Broad Cultural Education in the Training of Junior-High-School Teachers."

Saturday afternoon, an exhibit of the work of junior-high-school students will be presented. The students as well as the product will be on exhibition. The pupils will demonstrate the work in process of construction. This exhibit will provide an opportunity for teachers and administrators to view some of the activities in many of the progressive schools in this locality.

**SAMUEL J. MC LAUGHLIN, Chairman
Twelfth Annual Junior-High-School Conference**

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School Law Review

Daniel R. Hodgdon, Ph.D., J.D.
Member of the Bar of New York State

If a recommendation to close a school for economic reasons is before a board of education, is it possible for personal reasons to transfer teachers on tenure to the school in question, if there is a likelihood of its being closed at the end of the year?

This question can be answered only by a review of the decisions of the courts where the question has arisen. A board of education transferred twenty-six teachers on tenure to a school which they contemplated closing or discontinuing in the interests of economy. The teachers were unsatisfactory to certain members of the board. At the time of the closing of the school or the termination of the teachers' services, there were in the employ of the school board seven teachers who had not acquired tenure. The court held: "Granting that apart from the statute, a school board may in the interest of economy reduce the number of teachers, the protection afforded by the statute would be little more than a gesture if such board were held entitled to make that reduction by selecting for discharge teachers exempt by law therefrom and retaining the nonexempt (teachers on tenure and retaining the teachers not on tenure). If such reduction is to be made at all, and a place remains which the exempt teacher (teacher on tenure) is qualified to fill, such teacher is entitled to that place as against the retention of a teacher not protected by the statute" (not on tenure). *Downs v. Board of Education*, 171A 528 at p. 530 (5), 12 N.J. Misc. 345. March 23, 1934. Same holding for *Flechtner v. Board of Education*, 174A 529, 113 N.J. Law 401.

A public-school teacher entitled to indefinite tenure based on service for three years or more cannot be dismissed for reasons of economy, while other teachers not entitled to indefinite tenure are retained under employment. *Seidel v. Board of Education*, 164A 901, 902; 110 N.J. L. 31. Jan. 20, 1933.

A permanent teacher cannot be dismissed on the grounds of justifiable decrease in number of teaching positions where nontenure teachers are retained in the school system. *Banes v. Mendenhall*, 183 N.E. 556 following *Dailey v. Mendenhall*, 183 N.E. 561.

The rule regarding transfer of teachers seems to be that a board of education has the right to transfer a teacher on tenure to any school where the work is of the same character, but the dis-

cretionary power to make such transfer must be exercised in good faith and in accordance with the law. There must be no ulterior motive or bad faith or coercion to compel a teacher to perform some act not required by statute, nor may a transfer be resorted to as mere punishment to compel a teacher to do something which is not within the power of the board to legally compel the teacher to do. To transfer a teacher merely for the purpose of defeating the tenure law is an act of bad faith and a motive of evil intent and a means of circumvention of the law giving teachers permanent tenure.

CONDUCT OF SCHOOL NOT CONTROLLABLE BY PARENT

The law commits the government and conduct of the school, the employment of teachers, and other matters to the discretion of the board of school control of a school district, and places the school officials beyond the parents. The results may be good or bad; there is no remedy, as long as the board acts within the limits of its legal power and authority. If it employs such teachers as the law authorizes it to employ, the patrons cannot interfere by injunction or otherwise, merely because it might have found others more competent or satisfactory or because they do not especially want a certain teacher. The same rule applies to all other things left to its discretion. Matters, of course, not left by law to the discretion of the board must be performed strictly in accordance to the law. See *Spedden v. Board of Education*, 74 W.Va. 184; 52 LRA (NS) 163; 81 SW 725. *County Ct. v. Armstrong*, 34 W.Va. 326; 12 SE 488. *County Ct. v. Boreman*, 34 W.Va. 87; 11 SE 747.

It is for the teachers and board of school control within the reasonable exercise of its power and discretion to say what is best for the successful management and conduct of the schools, and not for the courts or for the parents. In other words, the law makes the judgment of the teacher and school officials superior to parent or court in these matters. The teacher or school official may use poor judgment in making rules and regulations or in conducting and managing the school, but mere mistakes in use of judgment or in the lack of good judgment are excusable by the law and are not within the province of the courts to consider. See *Wilson v. Chicago Bd. of Education* (1908), 233 Ill 464; 84 NE 697; 15 LRANS 1136 (aff 137 Ill A 187).

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Book Reviews

Philip W. L. Cox, *Review Editor*

Nations as Neighbors (Second Revised Edition), by L. O. PACKARD and C. P. SINNOTT. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1935, xiii + 673 pages, \$1.92.

The rapid and revolutionary changes in the modern industrial and economic world have led the authors to prepare this new edition of this attractive and deservedly popular book. It treats commerce and industry and geography in terms of nations. But it does far more than that. As its accurate title implies, it promotes a recognition of interdependence and of the desirability of an international sentiment of neighborliness. Moreover, in some cases, it helps the student to appreciate something of the history and of the aspirations and hopes of the peoples of the nations; in other cases, the authors seem to assume that geographical position and resources explain the economic status of the nation without reference to the people—a peculiarly serious omission in the cases of Scandinavia and Holland.

The book is adequately illustrated with splendid colored and black and white maps and graphs and with pictures. Its format is most attractive.

In Foreign Lands, an Exploratory Language Course and Cultural Introduction to Rome, Italy, France, Spain, Germany, by BETH HUGHSON and ADA GOSTICK. Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1934, xvi + 362 pages, \$1.24.

This attractive book should serve the double purpose indicated by its subtitle adequately. The authors have interspersed their introductory lessons in Latin, French, Spanish, and German with interesting explanations and descriptions of the countries and peoples and cultures of the lands where these languages are now or have been spoken. The volume is generously illustrated with pictures of buildings, statues, and scenes. The language lessons are purely introductory and illustrative; they do not present obstacles to pupils' progress through the year's work; nor should they dampen their enthusiasm for language study as grammar too often does. Pupils who complete the work laid out in this book with joy and adventure will have attained more linguistic culture than most high-school graduates actually achieve from the pursuit of many units in the several languages.

The Social Foundations of Education, by GEORGE S. COUNTS and others. Part IX, Report of the Commission on the Social Studies, American Historical Association. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934, 579 pages.

Dr. Counts conceives education to be one of the highest forms of statesmanship. "And since the American state, at least in theory, is not the government or some independent authority standing above the masses of the people, but rather the whole body of citizens functioning in their collective capacity, the educator, besides discharging mandatory obligations, is required to provide educational leadership for the nation and to assume general responsibility for the formulation of educational philosophies, policies, and programs." As brief, comprehensive, and irrefutable an assertion as has ever been made.

Three basic forces that this educator-statesman must understand and use—democratic tradition, natural endowment, and technology—are the chapter titles of Part I. Eleven trends and tensions in the midst of which he must work out educational salvation—family, economy, communication, health, education, recreation, science, art, justice, government, and world relations—constitute the chapter topics for Part II.

So far as words can transmit and explain them, here is the challenge and here the data with which to meet it. Unfortunately one can tell a person very little unless he already knows what is being told him. Thoughtful teachers will all read and ponder this very significant volume, as indeed many or most of them already have done. "Teachers" who do not enjoy thinking or who have not wherewithal to think with will avoid this book—and well they may.

Educational Administration as Social Policy, by JESSE H. NEWTON. Part VIII, Report of the Commission on the Social Studies, American Historical Association. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934, 301 pages.

The school administrator plays an important, if not the most important, role in relating the interest of society in the schools as a whole and its special interests in those subjects that prepare pupils for participation in society, as Dr. Krey

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points out in the preface of this volume. Peculiarly fitted by experience and philosophy to discuss this role is Dr. Newlon who has been a nationally recognized philosopher-administrator for almost a quarter of a century.

The volume consists of three major divisions: Evolution of Social Control; Legal and Professional Controls; and School Administration: An Applied Social Science. The individual chapters of the first and second divisions are largely a compilation of significant and germane quotations from studies and textbooks consistently ordered to illustrate and illuminate the major thesis of the author: that administrative theory and practice should harmonize with educational and social purposes. In Chapter X, he deals realistically with the political, economic, social, and managerial problems of the administrative leader. He sets forth no clear-cut way out of the dilemma. He contents himself with posing the problem and urging its serious recognition: that educational administration is a social science; that it is important; that it ranks with the study and practice of politics. "Above all else, a social philosophy of school administration is required in the present critical transitional period of American life."

Problems of Our Times (Volume I, Fundamental National Issues), by DUDLEY S. BRAINARD and LESLIE D. ZELENY. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1935, xvi + 199 pages, 96 cents.

This volume is the first of a series of three, the other two will deal with "social and economic planning" and with "international issues." The series seeks to supply the progressive social-science teacher with curriculum materials on the vital issues of today. The present volume draws extensively on the reports of the two Presidential committees—Recent Economic Changes and Recent Social Trends. The introductory chapter explains how social problems arise; the following eight chapters deal with economic problems; the next nine with social problems; Chapters XIX to XXI with governmental problems; and Chapter XXII contains summary and conclusions. From first page to last, the authors deal vigorously and convincingly with the subjects in hand. "Strikes are symptoms of present industrial unrest" is the opening sentence of Chapter I. "By 1933 most of the institutions for serving human needs had partially broken down. It was, therefore, almost inevitable for more and more people to look to their national government for assistance," so opens the concluding paragraph of the book. And between them are the clear authoritative statements regarding the industrial crisis, agricultural decline,

* * * * *

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By

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Charles Forrest Allen, Supervisor of Secondary Education, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Dorothy A. Yarnell, Head of the Department of English, Little Rock Junior College, Little Rock, Arkansas.

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The Delinquent Boy and the Correctional School, by NORMAN FENTON. Claremont (California) Colleges Guidance Center, 1935, 182 pages, \$1.50 (paper).

The Whittier State School and the California Bureau of Juvenile Research have stood in the fore-front of correctional institutions for more than twenty years. The author and his collaborators, Jessie C. Fenton, Margaret E. Murray and Dorothy K. Tyson, have been members of the staffs of one or the other of these organizations. The Whittier point of view is "that treatment must be based upon the thorough-going understanding of the delinquent as an individual—an understanding that can be reached only by pooling the case studies of psychologist, physician, psychiatrist, educator, and social worker." This conception, says Dr. Terman in the introduction, "will remain as the guiding spirit in our (further) efforts."

The author examines critically the school's efforts to individualize delinquent boys and the procedures of the child-guidance conference. He then presents a statistical study of certain characteristics of 500 boys, the boy's own story, and the interrelationships of traits of the boys. Next he deals with the program of academic and vocational education, the social guidance of the school, the return of the boy to the community, and his adjustments on placement.

The data regarding the last problem, while not new, are challenging. Children who do adjust themselves to placement (in comparison to those who do not do so) more frequently have foreign-born than American-born parents; fewer of them come from broken or disharmonious homes; they come of larger families; they less often dislike school; they have better scholarship records; they are more advanced in educational age; fewer of them are sex offenders; they less often acknowledge gang pressure; they have more constructive interests; they are more often interested in animals; they are *more often deficient in reading interests*; they have had a better conduct-records while at Whittier. A dozen whys must rise in the reader's mind; for the present however we have only the apparent facts surprising as some of them are.

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